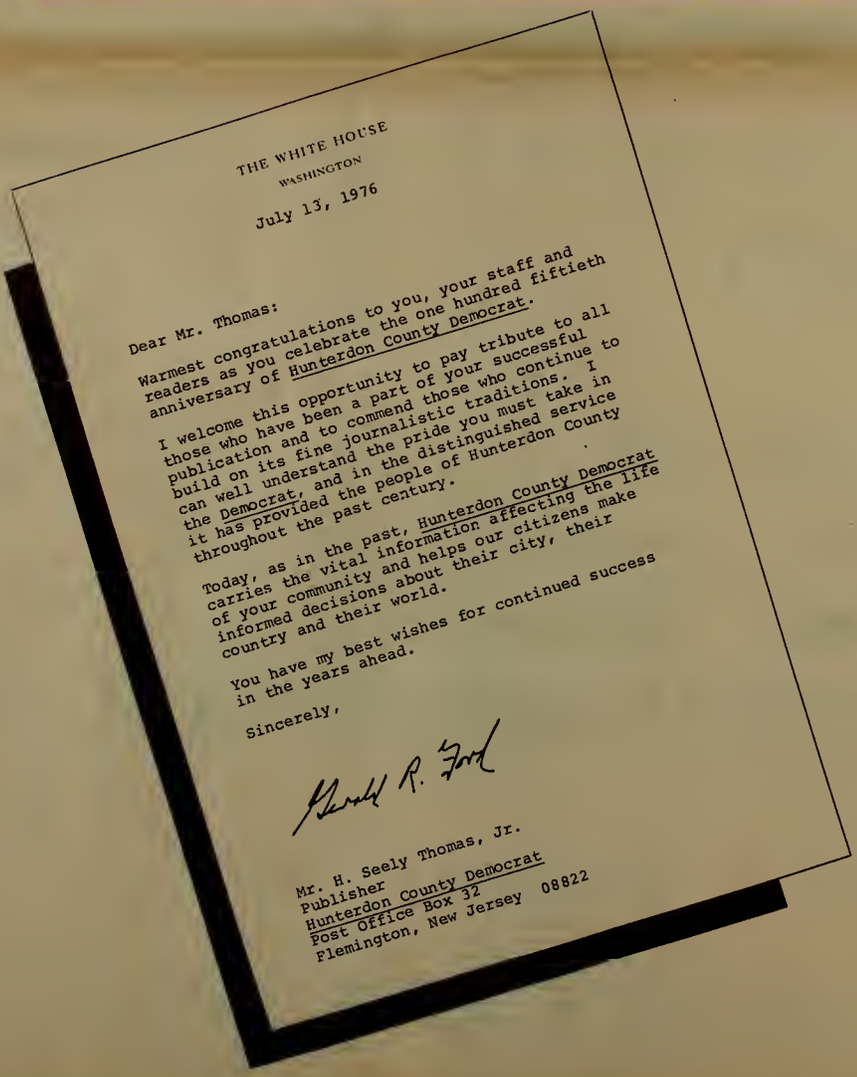
Hunterdon County Democrat



THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

July 13, 1976

Dear Mr. Thomas:

Warmest congratulations to you, your staff and readers as you celebrate the one hundred fiftieth anniversary of Hunterdon County Democrat.

I welcome this opportunity to pay tribute to all those who have been a part of your successful publication and to commend those who continue to build on its fine journalistic traditions. I can well understand the pride you must take in the Democrat, and in the distinguished service it has provided the people of Hunterdon County throughout the past century.

Today, as in the past, Hunterdon County Democrat carries the vital information affecting the life of your community and helps our citizens make informed decisions about their city, their country and their world.

You have my best wishes for continued success in the years ahead.

Sincerely,

Gerald R. Ford

Mr. H. Seely Thomas, Jr.
Publisher
Hunterdon County Democrat
Post Office Box 32
Flemington, New Jersey 08822

150TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION

July 22, 1976

Special section of The Hunterdon County Democrat, Flemington and The Delaware Valley News, Frenchtown, New Jersey

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On Our
CENTENNIAL
We Wish To
Congratulate The
Hunterdon County Democrat
On Their
SESQUI-CENTENNIAL

OUR SECOND CENTURY OF SERVICE
Flemington National
BANK & TRUST COMPANY
Member F.D.I.C

Democrat Features Latest Production Facilities

The Hunterdon County Democrat today begins a celebration of its founding when it plays host to the annual Farmers-Businessmen's picnic sponsored by the Hunterdon County Board of Agriculture.

The "birthday party" will wind up with an open house Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., when members of various departments will take the public on tours of The Democrat building on Minneakoning Road, Raritan Township.

These tours will show how a modern newspaper operates, and will demonstrate the recent years of change at The Democrat.

While it continues 150 years of tradition in serving Hunterdon, The Democrat has found new ways to improve that service.

Gone are the days of the linotype machine, "hot" type — that is, metallic type, and the lumbering old rotary press.

When H. Seely Thomas Jr. became publisher following the death of D. Howard Moreau in 1963, all departments of The Democrat were housed in a small complex of buildings on Court Street, Flemington, with the press out near the Jersey Central Railroad depot on Fulper Road.

The advertising department eventually moved to rented quarters at Main and Court Streets, and renovations were made to the Democrat Press job shop.

A gradual transition took place in the method of news and advertising production, with a mixture for a while of old-style hot type and plastic engravings plus "cold type" reproduction of print and pictures — basically, a photographic process.

The increasing circulation of The Democrat and the growing volume of work at the Democrat Press, led to the idea of putting everything together under one roof, in a spacious new building, with the latest in production equipment, including a Harris 845 offset press.

Offset makes possible a cleaner, clearer, more attractive presentation of words and especially pictures. The Harris press at The Democrat is also a high-speed piece of equipment, its six units and automatic folder capable of turning out up to 45,000 copies of a 48-page paper per hour.

Color reproduction is another feature of the press.

The move to the new building was made just two years ago. Improvements are continuing. A closed loading deck for trucks to deliver the tons of paper and other material needed in a newspaper — and for shipping out material produced by the press and the job shop — has been completed. A computer system to handle all financial records and transactions is being installed in the accounting department.

There are some reminders of the past — a standard letterpress, for example, in the job shop, and standard typewriters side by side with IBM Selectrics used by reporters and classified ad-takers for direct scanning and processing into type.

Publisher Thomas is responsible for overseeing all operations of The Democrat, the Delaware Valley News and the Democrat Press.

Edward J. Mack is the editor of The Democrat and The News, in charge of the reporting and photography staffs, with Harry Anderson as managing editor.

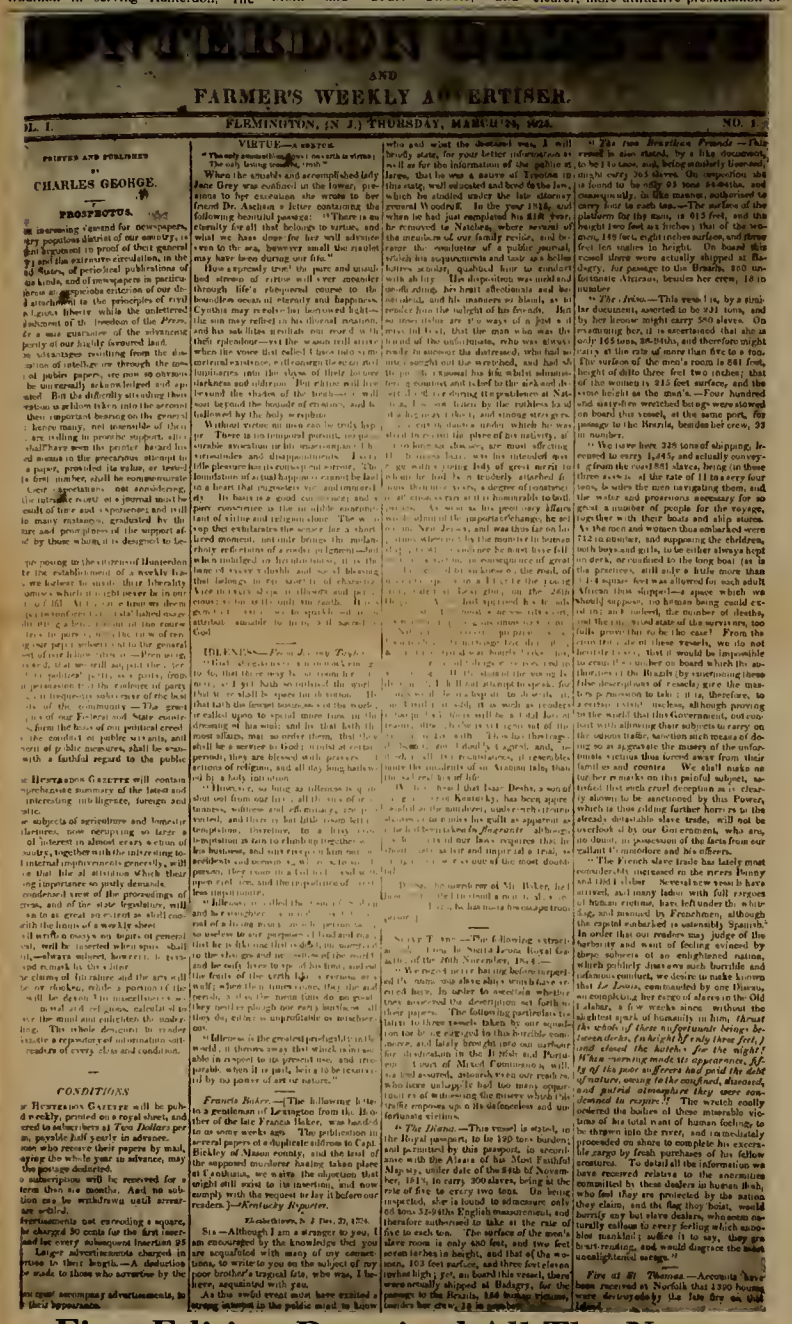
Bengt Gaterud became advertising manager in 1973, overseeing display and classified departments, sales persons and an art department.

Stephen Harrison as production manager is in charge of production for The Democrat and the Democrat Press, including the composing room, plate-making and printing departments, the press, and commercial printing.

Kenneth Kroeger, comptroller, heads accounting and bookkeeping and their staffs.

Harry Hunt is the circulation manager who sees that the paper is distributed by mail, news dealers and carriers, and keeps records for the Audit Bureau of Circulation.

They and their staffs will be greeting you as you visit The Democrat this week.



AND

FARMER'S WEEKLY ADVERTISER.

VOL. I. FLEMINGTON, (N. J.) THURSDAY, MARCH 23, 1825. NO. 1

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY CHARLES GEORGE.

PROSPECTUS.

[illegible] morning ensuing for newspapers, [illegible] populous districts of our country, is [illegible] proof of their general [illegible] and the extensive circulation, in the United States, of periodical publications of [illegible] kinds, and of newspapers in particular. [illegible] conscious exertion of our [illegible] attachment to the principles of civil [illegible] liberty while the unfettered [illegible] of the freedom of the Press, [illegible] a sure guarantee of the advancing [illegible] of our highly favoured land. [illegible] advantages resulting from the diffusion of intelligence through the medium of public papers, are now so obvious [illegible] be universally acknowledged and appreciated. But the difficulty attending their [illegible] is a problem taken into the account [illegible] their important bearing on the general [illegible]. Hence many, not unamiable of their [illegible] are willing to promise support, who shall have seen the printer hazard his [illegible] means in the precarious attempt to [illegible] a paper, provided its value, or tested [illegible] first number, shall be commensurate [illegible] expectations. [illegible] the intrinsic merit of a journal must be [illegible] of time and experience; and will [illegible] in many instances, graduated by the [illegible] and good will of the support afforded by those whom it is designed to benefit.

[illegible] proposing to the patronage of Hunterdon [illegible] the establishment of a weekly [illegible] we believe to unite their liberality [illegible] which it might never be in our [illegible] to do. We are then we deem [illegible] the usual hackneyed usage [illegible] the course [illegible] of our [illegible] subscribers, [illegible] the general [illegible] of our fellow citizens—Upon [illegible] we will adopt the [illegible] of no political party, nor party, from [illegible] the conduct of parties [illegible] frequently subversive of the best [illegible] of the community.—The great [illegible] of our Federal and State constitutions, form the basis of our political creed; [illegible] the conduct of public servants, and merit of public measures, shall be examined with a faithful regard to the public [illegible].

The HUNTERDON GAZETTE will contain [illegible] comprehensive summary of the latest and most interesting intelligence, foreign and domestic.

[illegible] subjects of agriculture and domestic manufactures, now occupying so large a share of interest in almost every section of the country, together with the interesting topics of internal improvements generally, will receive that liberal attention which their growing importance so justly demands.

[illegible] considered view of the proceedings of Congress, and of the state legislature, will [illegible] as great importance as shall consist with the limits of a weekly sheet. [illegible] will [illegible] essays on topics of general [illegible], will be inserted when space shall [illegible]—always subject, however, to [illegible] and [illegible] by the editor.

[illegible] claims of his nature and the arts will [illegible] or rhetoric, while a portion of the [illegible] will be devoted to miscellaneous [illegible] moral and religious, calculated [illegible] the mind and enlighten the understanding. The whole designed to render [illegible] a repository of information suitable [illegible] readers of every class and condition.

CONDITIONS

[illegible] HUNTERDON GAZETTE will be published weekly, printed on a royal sheet, and [illegible] to subscribers at Two Dollars per [illegible], payable half yearly in advance.

[illegible] who receive their papers by mail, [illegible] paying the whole year in advance, may [illegible] the postage deducted.

[illegible] subscription will be received for a [illegible] than six months. And no subscription can be withdrawn until arrearages are paid.

Advertisements not exceeding a square, [illegible] be charged 50 cents for the first insertion and for every subsequent insertion 25 [illegible].

Larger advertisements charged in [illegible] to their length.—A deduction [illegible] made to those who advertise by the [illegible].

[illegible] must accompany advertisements, to [illegible] their appearance.

VIRTUE—A SONNET.

"The only monument worth earth is virtue;
The only lasting wealth, truth."

When the amiable and accomplished lady Jane Grey was confined in the tower, previous to her execution she wrote to her friend Dr. Ascham a letter containing the following beautiful passage: "There is an eternity for all that belongs to virtue, and what we have done for God will adhere even to the sea, however small the market may have been during our life."

How expressly true! the pure and unsullied stream of virtue will ever meander through life's rhapsodical course to the boundless ocean of eternity and happiness. Cynthia may revolve her borrowed light—the sun may reflect to his diurnal mansion, and his satellites resplendent over the world, their splendour—yet the season will arrive when the vivid orb called Time into silent nothingness, will cease to be, and luminaries into the abyss of their lost love darkness and oblivion. But virtue will live beyond the shades of the brave—it will soar beyond the bounds of mortality, and be followed by the holy seraphim.

Without virtue no man can be truly happy. There is no temporal pursuit, no pleasurable sensation or his enjoyment, but vanquishes and disappointments. Even life pleasure has its consequent sorrow. The foundation of actual happiness cannot be laid in a heart that is opposite to moral and immortal ends. Its basis is a good conscience; and a pure conscience is the indelible stamp of virtue and religion alone. The wretch who exhilarates the senses for a short lived moment, not unfrequently brings the melancholy reflections of a sober judgment—and who indulges in luxuriousness, at the balance of sense is doubtful and so of blessing that belongs to the superior of character. Vice in its shape or illusory and pernicious form is ever dangerous. It is generally [illegible] to sparkle and [illegible] attribute amiable to [illegible] and secure God.

IDLENESS.—*From Jane Taylor.*

"Idleness is a most [illegible] to be, that the energy [illegible] is [illegible] and [illegible] to spend [illegible] in [illegible] and [illegible] God.

[illegible] "Idleness is the greatest prodigality in the world, it throws away that which is invaluable in respect to its present use, and irreparable when it is past, being to be recovered by no power of art or nature."

Francis Baker.—The following biography, to a gentleman of Lexington from the relatives of the late Francis Baker, was handed us some weeks ago. The publication in several papers of a duplicate address to Capt. Bickley of Mason county, and the trial of the supposed murderer having taken place at Cynthiana, we waive the objection that might still exist to its insertion, and now comply with the request to lay it before our readers.]—*Kentucky Reporter.*

Elizabethtown, N. J. Dec. 27, 1824.

Sir,—Although I am a stranger to you, I am encouraged by the knowledge that you are acquainted with many of my connections, to write to you on the subject of my poor brother's tragical fate, who was, I believe, acquainted with you.

As the awful event must have excited a strong interest in the public mind to know who and what the deceased was, I will [illegible] for your better information as well as for the information of the public at large, that he was a native of Trenton in this state, well educated and bred to the law, which he studied under the late attorney general Woodruff. In the year 1816, and when he had just completed his 21st year, he removed to Natchez, where several of the members of our family resided, and became the conductor of a public journal, which his acquaintance and took as a better letters scholar, qualified him to conduct with ability. The disposition and manners of the deceased, his heart affectionate and benevolent, and his manners so bland, as to render him the delight of his friends. But as these traits are the very reverse of a just and wise [illegible], that the man who was the friend of the unfortunate, who was always ready to succour the distressed, who had no [illegible] to spare, and who [illegible] being a counsel and relief to the sick and distressed, [illegible] the gratitude of a [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

Hunterdon County Democrat.

NINETY SEVENTH VOLUME. HUNTERDON COUNTY DEMOCRAT, FLEMINGTON, NEW JERSEY, WEDNESDAY, JUNE 28, 1922. NUMBER 50

SIXTY-ONE GRADUATES AT FLEMINGTON HIGH

A Big Audience: The Prize Winners in High and Grammar Schools

GRADUATES' PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

WITH THE BASE BALL FANS ON THE DIAMOND.

Flemington's Score Leaves Room for Improvement And There are Hopes of Better Things.

THE ALUMNI WIN FROM HIGH SCHOOL.

Hunterdon Editors Battled Each Other Over Politics

Feuding editors — front page fiction — columns of patent medicine ads — that was the Hunterdon County Democrat and its predecessors in the 19th century.

Today's journalist and historian have ample information readily available about this era from the pages of the newspapers themselves, well preserved by the Hunterdon County Historical Society and in the files of the Hunterdon County Hall of Records.

Historians have used these files to draw a clear picture of the early newspapers and some of the early newspapermen of Hunterdon County.

Probably the most detailed and authentic information has been put together in book form by Dr. Hubert Schmidt of Rutgers University.

Dr. Schmidt, who retired only last summer as a history professor at Rutgers, began in the 1930's to write a weekly column for The Democrat on olden days in New Jersey which he still continues.

Much of the following material is derived from Schmidt, author of "Rural Hunterdon" and "The Press in Hunterdon County."

As Schmidt points out, fascinating glimpses of life in the 1800s can be gleaned from the advertising columns which always took up the last page of the four-page paper. One can read of the dozens of different nostrums advertised for everything from chilblains to tuberculosis: the rewards offered for news of runaway apprentice lads, or "bound girls", the notices of horses stolen, of vigilante meetings.

On page 2, editors used clippings from other newspapers with which they exchanged copies. And judging by their nature, our ancestors had a taste for the lurid. They nearly always featured steamboat disasters, murders, executions, and the like. Schmidt said that one editor used "Melancholy Accident" as a head so often he must have kept it set up in type permanently.

Peoples' feelings on politics ran strong and unrestrained. When the political pot began to boil in election years, rival politicians were accused of every kind of corruption and vice. Editors of rival party organs flung at each other such epithets as "wallowing sow," "brutal, debased mind," and "snivelling blockhead."

However, there were no rival editors in Hunterdon to lambaste each other in 1825 because there were no editors at all. It was Philadelphia newsman, launched The Gazette. Until then Hunterdon had depended for its news mainly on Philadelphia papers, a day away by stage.

The Gazette appeared as a four-page paper, four columns to a page, price $2 a year, if the subscriber came to the office for it — more if it were delivered by a man going around on horseback. The paper contained little local news, mainly items clipped from other papers — informative or humorous — editorial comment, some fiction, and advertisments.

The office was in a building, long since torn down, on the site now occupied by Sacks Shoes on the east side of Main Street.

The Gazette stood alone in its field until 1838. The Gazette, while "Whiggish" in its opinion, owed no subsidy to that party. At any rate, George's tone was mild contrasted to some of his successors. To be sure, when needled by an unpleasant correspondent, George did characterize him as "the most abominable, saucy and impudent fellow in the world."

He seemed to be a remarkably enlightened editor, alive to problems of the day. He urged, time and again, establishment of public schools, often poorly maintained. He showed interest in the problems of the Indians, prison reform, temperance and was for a protective tariff — a Whig principle.

He sold the paper in 1838 to John S. Brown, whereupon it became clearly a Whig organ, perhaps because The Hunterdon Democrat, an organ of the Democratic party was born, under the editorship of George Seymour.

Soon the rival editors were going at it hammer and tong. Schmidt says "in fairness to Brown, Seymour probably started it when he called Brown a 'swine' and a 'blue hyena'."

The Gazette changed hands again in 1842, and soon Seymour was attacking the new editor, Henry Buffington, calling him among other things, "demented, crazy as a bed bug, — let him grunt and wallow in his mire of filth."

While not quite up to Seymour, Buffington did rush into the fray with his own brands of epithet. Reason for all these denunciations being political differences. The papers were full of politics, neither still giving any serious coverage to local news. In 1850 The Gazette had a circulation of 840 and The Democrat, 800.

But The Gazette's fortunes were declining with the decline of the Whigs. The new Republican party was emerging, and while The Gazette would have probably joined forces with the new party, it unfortunately was delivered into the hands of a man with different ideas. In 1854 Willard Nichols bought it and took it into the camp of the American Party — known as the "Know Nothings" — who believed in a party for simon-pure white Americans of old stock — dedicated to excluding recent immigrants.

"The Gazette went down as rapidly as the American Party" says Schmidt, and it was sold at a sheriff's sale in 1858. The purchaser, Adam Suydam, also acquired a new rival, with the birth of the Hunterdon Republican that same year. Meanwhile Seymour had sold The Democrat to Adam Bellis.

Ouring the Civil War, The Gazette took a rather detached point of view, but on the whole supported Lincoln. However, The Democrat — forging ahead of The Gazette in prestige with the dominance of the Democratic party in Hunterdon — deplored the war and disliked and distrusted Lincoln. While never actually a "Copperhead" or Southern sympathizer, Bellis found fault with the conduct of the war and fulminated against the conduct of the draft wheras men could avoid it by paying $300 or by paying a substitute.

Both papers gave space to war news and to local activities designed to raise money or send packages to the wounded and to the boys in camps.

When Lincoln was assasinated Bellis atoned for his former criticism by giving full coverage to the story, to the funeral and to local reactions. He even reprinted an editorial which called the assasination "the greatest atrocity known to the annals of crime."

Meanwhile Rutsen Schenck who had purchased The Gazette from Suydam found that the way of an independent newspaper was hard. In his columns he urgently appealed for money due him — this was a never-ceasing complaint of all the editors — and finally advertised it for sale.

The Gazette was sold to Charles Tomlinson in 1866, and almost overnight appeared with a new masthead and new allegiance. Tomlinson rechristened it The Democrat.

It did seem a bit much to have a Democrat and a Hunterdon Democrat competing for patrons in the same town. Well, Tomlinson was friendly with the editor of the Hunterdon Democrat, Dr. Henry Nightingale. Tomlinson wrote, July 3, 1967: "It pleases us to announce that with this issue The Democrat ceases to exist. We have purchased the Hunterdon Democrat, and our intention is to immediately merge the two which we hope will be entirely satisfactory to patrons of the combined journals."

And then the familiar plaint:

"We expect to visit the county for the purpose of collecting what is due us and what we need."

Soon a new power press saved labor and new type enlivened the format, a column was added to each page, and the editors did make an attempt at more local news.

Lewis Runkle, fresh out of the Army after serving in the Civil War, was recruited as local editor, and was the particular shining star of the paper.

Snell, writing his history of Hunterdon in 1881, on his section on the press, observes that "much of the interest attaching to the paper is due to his (Runkle's) persevering industry and tact."

For more than three decades his "local department" made spirited reading, for Runkle was a man of caustic wit and lively prejudices; he poked fun at human foibles, both masculine and feminine, aired his pet aversions: smart aleck lads, stray dogs, cigarette smoking were a few — and waged campaigns in column after column, at different periods, a new Presbyterian church building, for street sprinklers, and for street lights at one end of town.

He also took many a crack at the nefarious "Radicals" (Republicans) and at rival editors. In the following sample the polishes off the G.O.P. Presidential nominee Grant, and his Republican editor defender:

"They have nominated for President a wine bibber, a dram drinker, a lover of brandy, a man who has been seen to stagger in the streets and on Sunday. Can anyone recommend the taste and morals of Grant?"

In his next week's column he takes note of some critical comment from the Republican:

"While we do not claim to be near so smart as the elegant(?) quill driver across the way, if memory serves us right, the nice young man of The Republican has been seen on more than one occasion to out-do pugfancier Grant in his allegiance to Bacchus."

Readers who have enjoyed some of the caustic comments in "Old Ink" in this paper are indebted to Runkle.

In 1875 Robert Killgore took over The Democrat and soon dominated Hunterdon County journalism — which included 13 papers by 1890.

Killgore, a former surrogate, pledged support to free schools, law and order. At this time the paper was a four-page paper, eight columns to the page with about 50 percent of the space devoted to advertisements. Some were illustrated with crude woodcuts. News was still secondary to editorial comment and literary efforts.

In 1876 The Democrat took over new quarters which, Runkle told his readers, were the best newspaper offices of any town in New Jersey. They were located above what was then the site of Higgins' news store, adjoining the Hunterdon County National Bank. There they stayed till Moreau moved the entire plant to a new building on Court Street in 1928.

Killgore took his son, Anthony, in partnership with him in 1894. Before the elder man died, in 1898, he and Runkle parted company. Schmidt speculates that Runkle may have been too caustic for Anthony, who then took over the locals department. They lost their former pungency.

Anthony Killgore revamped the paper in 1900 when it appeared for the first time with eight pages. Page 1, however, continued to feature serial stories. In 1914, without any comment, the serials, the jokes and comment all disappeared from the front page and "locals" — tidbits sent in by correspondents from all parts of the county — took their place.

Hunterdon papers basked in a general prosperity till 1914 when World War I took them almost by surprise, there was so little hard news from the world. Killgore remained a pacifist till the conflict neared for this country, and then became a hawk overnight. He urged his readers to read the dailies for the war news, but he did publish letters from doughboys in camps and from local girls overseas as nurses.

On the home front there were all sorts of war scares involving saboteurs in the county which Hunterdon papers took as gospel ("Spies on Pickle Mountain!")

Schmidt reports that New Germantown would probably not have changed its name to Oldwick if it hadn't been for pressure from the press.

With the end of the war, The Democrat returned to its old style of reporting. Killgore died in January of 1922, probably Hunterdon's most esteemed citizen. Eulogies poured in, testimonies to his fairness in opening his columns to the opposition, stories that, before Prohibition, he had refused to accept liquor advertisements and thereby lost many hundreds of dollars through his steadfast principles.

Then Alex Moreau with his nephew Howard Moreau, bought The Democrat, and its first issue, June 28, 1922 truly marked the beginning of a new era.

HEADQUARTERS of The Democrat when D. Howard Moreau "came aboard" was on Main Street, Flemington, adjoining the Hunterdon County National Bank. This is how it looked around the turn of the century, before DHM's time. Anthony Killgore was its editor, and he's seen in the upstairs window.

'Plain-Speaking' Promised When D. Howard Moreau Became Owner

What happened to the Well Baby Station we wonder? It was celebrating its first anniversary with 72 mothers and babies. A doctor and the community nurse were the judges, and prizes awarded for the healthiest specimens. A young man named Raymond Kerr garnered first prize.

Also of note, the Delaware River Bridge at Frenchtown was declared unsafe and closed to traffic when people could hear the "snapping and crackling of the beams." No less than ten of the beams were cracked.

In an editorial on Page 4, the new owners write they have little to say in the way of promises, preferring to be judged by performances.

"Occasions will probably arise when plain speaking will be necessary and we shall endeavor to perform our duty — the reader may be assured that such comments as are made are the editor's true sentiments — and while he has not the smallest hope that all his readers agree with him — those who disagree will be gladly given opportunity to air their opinions on the same page as the editor."

All who knew the late Mr. Moreau can confirm that he kept to his word to the day of this death.

The big news was a baseball game and the high school graduation. Those were the two-column headlines on the June 28, 1922, issue of The Hunterdon County Democrat, the first one under the aegis of D. Howard Moreau, and his uncle, Alex Moreau.

"High Bridge gave Flemington another lacing here Saturday" started off the lead story on Page 1. But one had to read right down to the score box to find out the score! (8 to 3).

On the left hand side of the paper, is recorded that 61 pupils were graduated in the Flemington High School auditorium. These included honor pupil John Schenck, who became general manager of Foran Foundry, and well-known in Flemington. All the prizes and winners were enumerated and the article included a listing of the graduates who would attend colleges or normal school in the fall.

Another familiar Flemington name appears in a news story, reporting that Edwin K. Large, son of Senator and Mrs. George H. Large, has been appointed postmaster in Atlanta, Ga. "The Atlanta Constitution, recognized as the leading newspaper of the South . . . has commented on the appointment most favorably," it reported.

The paper advertised on its front page for a "boy to learn the printer's trade at the Democrat office. Must be over sixteen, a fair speller, and have a reasonable amount of spring in his heels."

The pulling power of classified ads was noted. "For the amount expended, no advertising pays better than cent-a-word advertising in the Democrat. Cent-a-words pay because they are read."

(Occasionally an old-timer still calls the Democrat asking to put in a "cent-a-word.")

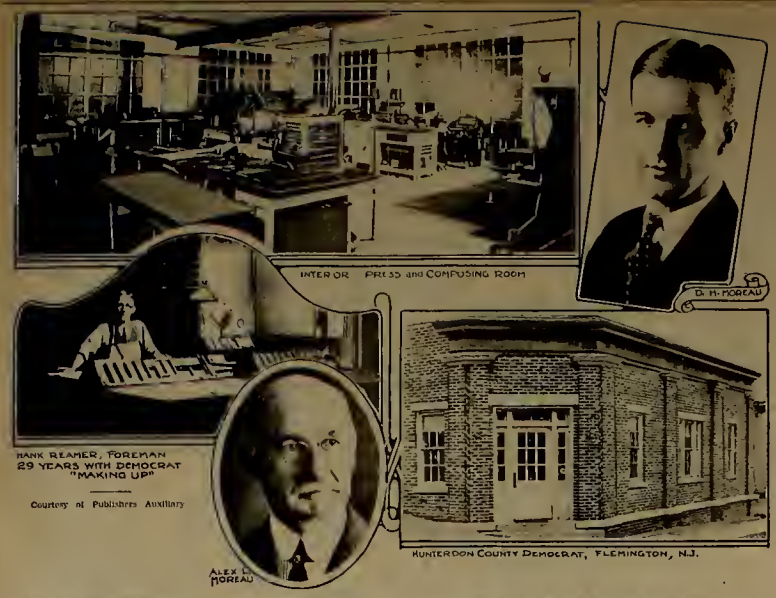
Weddings and obituaries still appeared on Page 1.

Inside the paper, Harry Iobst of the Lebanon Garage offered a Maxwell touring car for $885, and in Flemington, at the Nevius Store, knit Jersey bathing suits cost $3.50 to $6.50. Young men's suits at D.S. Hall's cost $20 to $35, and shoes "high or low cut" were $4 and up.

Radios were still a novelty. The Flemington Odd Fellows Lodge attracted members to meetings by playing a radio to hear returns from boxing bouts and ball games.

Agricultural items dominated the For Sale section of the cent-a-words — laying mash, baby chicks, heifers, horses, wagons, binders, rakes and buckwheat seed.

A 118-YEAR-OLD INTERNATIONAL PRODUCER
OF QUALITY PHARMACEUTICALS
SALUTES THE 150-YEAR-OLD DEMOCRAT



PROUD OF THE DEMOCRAT'S modern facilities, D.H. Moreau published this montage soon after the paper moved into its Court Street building in 1928. The Democrat then was printed on the same premises, on a flatbed press which consumed little more than half a ton of paper weekly, a fraction of today's newsprint total. Alex Moreau was Howard Moreau's uncle and purchased The Democrat in 1922. Howard Moreau later became sole owner.

Moreau Arrival Brought New Style Of Journalism

In early 1922, three tiny weeklies struggled for the limited readership of the Flemington area, while other equally tiny and parochial newspapers survived in Clinton, High Bridge, Glen Gardner, Milford, Frenchtown, Whitehouse and Lambertville.

There hadn't really been a new idea since the 19th century, and no real attempt by any of the papers to cover the entire county.

Then like a fresh breeze across a desert, change came in the person of young Daniel Howard Moreau.

Tall, lanky, sandy-haired, "Sandy" as he was known to his family, was a native of Freehold where he had grown up on a farm. After graduation from Middlebury College in 1920 he had worked for papers in New York State and Hightstown. It was in partnership with his uncle, Alex Moreau, that he bought the Democrat from the Killgore estate in June of 1922.

Uncle Alex, who owned and published the Freehold Transcript, was the silent partner in the venture. He advanced his nephew's financial share and then, evidently, gave him his blessing and his head — to run the paper as he pleased.

The newspaper office had been for half a century above a cigar and news store a few doors south of the Hunterdon County National Bank's office on Main Street. But a new broom was sweeping it clean of its 19th century mustiness.

For modern journalism came to Hunterdon with Moreau's very first issue June 28, 1922. On Page One, headlines over news stories — real news stories from all over the county! — replaced local tidbits from Sergeantsville, Ringoes, Oldwick and so on.

While readers avidly perused such "locals," they were relegated to the back pages. And correspondents were firmly instructed to change their cosy style. Moreau banished such phrases as "a bountiful collation was heartily enjoyed" and "a wonderful time was had by all."

He changed lots of things. Circulation was 2,600 (it had been 2,000 in 1874!), and subscribers owed the paper $3,200 in back bills. Moreau not only collected every cent due, but established a pay-in-advance policy. Subscribers grumbled — but paid.

A later employe, Sidney Moody, now of the Associated Press, marvelled that "Moreau could do anything in the place without even loosening his tie or shirt collar. I have known him to talk deep business in his office all morning, go to Rotary for lunch, set type in the back shop in the afternoon, and help with proof reading the front page when day was done. On the few times I delivered papers, Howard knew as much about the route as the regular man.

"The day of the '55 flood, I showed up early expecting to be swamped, as our managing editor Jack Prescott was away, and found Howard had moved in without a word and was already well into his own flood of stories, demonstrating his versatility on a grand scale."

By Sid's day Moreau had had lots of practice. Aside from printers and pressmen and a string of rural correspondents, he was virtually a one-man operation: the one man in question gathering news, writing stories, heads and editorials, reading proof and helping set type — beside attending to the business side.

He also found time to write "Cryptic Quips" on the editorial page, a column of light-hearted observations, topical jokes, occasional rhymes. In 1927 that column became The Periscope, which continued under different commentators until recent years.

A country boy born and bred, Moreau plugged in his editorials any project that he thought of benefit to the farmers. Soon after his arrival he took up the cudgels for a county agricultural agent which the County Board of Agriculture very much desired.

Farmers were suspicious, however of an "out-lander" telling them what to do and fearful of a rise in taxes. They resoundingly voted the proposal down that November.

Well, you can't win 'em all. But when the Democrat editor, over the years, went after something (pro or con) he usually rallied the county behind him. It has often been said that he brought Hunterdon its first feeling of unity.

By 1927 the people were won over, and a county agent took up his duties. Moreau promptly invited the agent, Edwin Gaunt, to write a weekly column which soon became the paper's most popular feature for the farmers.

Soon after that Moreau enthusiastically backed organization of the Flemington Auction Market, and then published its volume of sales each week.

Moreau hired his first full-time reporter, Gerald Zich, in 1928, and that year also saw completion of the Democrat building on Court Street. It consisted then of a business office, with a portion fenced off for the reporter, and Moreau's tiny sanctum adjoining. Off the big composing room in back, the flat bed press roared and rattled as the farm section, the classified, and finally the news section came off its rollers on succeeding days.

Soon the "Goss Comet Perfecting Press" replaced the old one — "whereby eight pages could be printed, folded, and counted in a single operation."

More improvements followed and the head, "Democrat Installs Newest Equipment" appeared frequently.

"Howard ran a turn-of-the-century benevolent despotism complete with old fashioned chair and desk," observed Moody. "Yet he knew when to get out of his old flat bed press and into a rotary. He would have been just as adaptable to the electronic era had he lived."

A vast improvement for the whole staff was the addition of a suite of offices as a second floor of the building in 1959.

There were probably four or five on the editorial staff by that time. But Jerry Zich was still the sole staff in 1932 when Zich took over as the first editor of The Delaware Valley News.

Moreau, who in 1926 had bought out the Democrat-Advertiser of Flemington, had in 1932 purchased the Frenchtown Star and turned it into the Delaware Valley News, with the printing done in Flemington.

The Clinton Democrat was absorbed in 1936 and its editor, Leon Carpenter, added to the growing staff of the Hunterdon County Democrat. The Hunterdon Republican passed from the scene in 1950.

When Zich took over in Frenchtown, Moreau hired young Alan Painter, fresh out of Middlebury, who had done school reporting for Moreau in his Flemington High School days.

Painter recalls that his boss sent him to the high school one day a week to talk to the

(Continued on next page)

BABCOCK EXPRESS PRESS' acquired by The Democrat in 1923 was the speediest handfed press manufactured. From early days on, 'Democrat Installs Newest Equipment' was a frequent headline. The late Milton Sutphin feeds each sheet by hand, four pages at a time. To print some 4,000 copies of a 16-page paper required an average of 13 hours of presswork — and the papers still had to be folded.

Wescott Praises Help Given Medical Center

To the Editor:

Between 1948 and 1953 literally thousands of Hunterdon citizens gave hundreds of thousands of hours and untold devotion to assure that the dream of Hunterdon Medical Center became a reality.

In recalling those early days, however, I can identify perhaps five individuals without whose very particular contribution the Center would never have become a reality. Uniquely important among these people was Howard Moreau, then publisher and editor of the Hunterdon County Democrat.

Essential to the success of the project from its inception was the ability to communicate with the widely dispersed people of our essentially rural community. This was possible only because virtually everyone subscribed to a weekly newspaper — and, of course, the vast majority received the Democrat.

Our scrapbooks show that hardly a week passed from mid-1948 when the concept first began taking shape on through the opening in 1953, that the Democrat did not carry at least one story. At times, they devoted full pages to a program of particular importance. At one point during the fund drive they printed a section containing the names of all donors.

Actually the support during the original construction fund drives starting in 1949 was of particular importance. By the time the Center opened our small community had contributed $1,200,000 toward the construction of the hospital. There were only 60 gifts of over $1,000 which constituted but a small fraction of the total amount raised. But 80% of the families contributed.

It seems certain that this represents a degree of community involvement that has never been equaled in the past and almost certainly will not be equaled in the future.

In the 23 years since HMC opened, the Democrat has continued to keep the community informed of the problems, the successes, and the failures of this institution to which they have given so much support and dedication. All of us involved in the early fund drives or in the intervening years willingly attest to the extraordinary significance of the role the Democrat has played.

Of course, Hunterdon Medical Center is not the only worthy institution or cause that has benefited by the Democrat's steadfast concern for the progress and well being of our community.

Hunterdon County now has a most prestigious hospital where not too many years ago it had none. To the extent that any of us has reason to be thankful for the presence of a fine institution, a skilled medical staff and dedicated, highly trained employees, we owe a debt of gratitude to the Democrat.

LLOYD B. WESCOTT
Chairman
Hunterdon Medical Center

Oldest Newsman

The acknowledged dean of Hunterdon newsmen is Leon (Carpy) Carpenter, now 90, of Clinton, who started setting type at the age of six for the Clinton Democrat, published by his father and uncle, and remained in journalism with that paper and finally with The Hunterdon County Democrat for 75 years.

The Hunterdon County Democrat absorbed the Clinton paper in 1936. Carpy also had worked for the Hunterdon Republican, when it went out of business 26 years ago. His column, "Carpy's Quips," ran for 22 years in The Hunterdon County Democrat, setting a record for longevity, according to Carpenter.

Leon A. Carpenter

Congratulations
to the
Hunterdon County Democrat
for
150 Years of
Dedicated
Service
to
Hunterdon
County

THE NEW JERSEY
TELEPHONE COMPANY
A Company of United Telecommunications, Inc.

Jersey Central Power & Light Company
direct descendant of
Lambertville Electric Light, Heat & Power Co., Inc.
(Hunterdon County's first power utility)
proudly joins in saluting the

Hunterdon County Democrat

(the county's first newspaper)
during this celebration of its 150th Anniversary.

jersey central POWER & LIGHT
A GPU COMPANY

Foresaw Need For County Planning

(Continued from previous page)

journalism class, students who put out the column of school news always printed in The Democrat.

"He wanted also to encourage any of the class who might want to take up journalism as a career," said Painter. "So I talked to the kids at the end of the week, when the work load eased off a bit. Before we went to press, Howard and I got to the office at 7 a.m. each day, we both did reporting, writing, head writing, editing copy from correspondents, and proof reading, then on Wednesdays went out in the shop to help make up pages.

"But we both worked equally hard — Howard was never a taskmaster. In fact he left me, and others who came later, pretty much to our own devices.

"And when you made a mistake, you never got a hard word, he never hawled anyone out. Consequently, you wanted to live up to his standards — and that went through the whole organization."

It wasn't long after Painter got there that the world was electrified by the kidnapping of the Lindbergh baby from his home in the Sourland Mountains. Painter and Zich were among the first reporters on the scene that morning.

There have been many millions of words written since about the kidnapping and the subsequent trial of Bruno Hauptmann for the deed and the baby's death.

Perhaps here it will suffice to say that Howard Moreau seemed like a staunch rock while the hordes of feverish reporters frantically eddied about him and excited tourists thronged into "sleepy little Flemington" for the trial of the century.

"Please be as accurate in your facts about us as you are about the trial itself," Moreau cautioned the reporters editorially.

"One metropolitan paper speaks of the 'be-whiskered, be-booted Sourland Mountain farmers coming into Flemington Saturday nights to do their simple shopping.'

"Very few Sourland Mountain farmers have visited Flemington in the last 40 years. They prefer nowadays to jump into their Cadillacs and go to a city."

"Ye gods, we're civilized!" he editorialized in mock astonishment, when a daily called the Democrat the "most civilized" among the country's weeklies.

Beside chastising irresponsible reporting, Moreau also cautioned the reporters against filing stories about skyrocketing prices in Flemington so that they could pad their expense accounts. "If you write that, the prices WILL skyrocket," he added.

"Come again when you can stay longer," he invited them at trial's end. "We trust you will re-visit the little newspaper shop opposite the jail. Our fondest hope is that we may be found at the old stand, and on our side of the street."

While the trial had all of Flemington by its ears — although the citizens apparently behaved throughout with commendable restraint — it also had indirect repercussions for the county as a whole.

With all the publicity generated by the trial, including descriptions of the beauties of the rural county, more and more city folk came out — not to return to the soil — but to get away from city living and still be within commuting distance.

Moreau foresaw the problems that were bound to come with the influx, and in the late 1930's began to advocate planning and zoning.

But this was an idea whose time had not yet come, and farmers and other natives objected strenuously to the idea of any regulations on their use or selling of land.

But Moreau lived to see the time when community planning was deemed necessary, his paper reporting all the steps taken by each municipality, possibly to encourage others to "go thou and do likewise."

He was also in the van of those advocating regionalization of the schools, and indeed had always shown the greatest interest in education in Hunterdon County.

And while he was chary as to accepting trusteeships or chairmanships of organizations, deeming such responsibilities might be regarded as a conflict of interest with his editorial views, he did show his concern for education by running for the Flemington Board of Education in 1940.

As Alan Painter recalled the story, unpleasant stories were circulating about a high school teacher and then the administration of the school was called into question. "The community was all stirred up." He continued:

"Howard decided a strong school board was the answer, and much against his inclination, decided to run at the next election and persuaded a couple of other public spirited citizens to run too. They were elected and gave the board the shot in the arm it needed, and also restored people's confidence. The offending teacher and principal resigned."

One of his paramount interests from his earliest days as an adopted son of Hunterdon was to publish articles on Hunterdon's history and encourage his reporters to ferret out little known historical facts. He began printing historian Hubert Schmidt's "Old Days in Northwest Jersey" which continues to this day.

"Howard revitalized the Hunterdon Historical Society," recalls Kenneth Myers, local historian and former freeholder. "It was a moribund organization and old Hiram Deats, who had been its original patron and collector, was thinking of giving his extensive collection to Rutgers.

"It took Howard to head him off. And to spearhead a drive to get the Historical Society started again. In fact, I know he paid money out of his own pocket to hire Berthold Sorby to come in and catalogue the papers."

While Moreau was deeply concerned that the people of Hunterdon should have all possible benefits, and he campaigned vigorously for numerous projects, he did his own investigating and arrived at his own independent conclusions.

"Once I went to see Howard and asked him to write an editorail favoring the establishment of a fire company in Quakertown," recounted Myers.

"I'll never forget the way he looked at me and replied, 'no one tells me what to put on my editorial page.' Finally, several months later, he did write an editorial and was most helpful. But first he was going to find out for himself if that fire company was necessary!"

Howard was also a little wary when the idea of a county hospital was first broached. But after reading surveys and listening to experts, he supported the campaign to raise funds with the most whole-hearted vigor.

"He gave the most generous and helpful publicity and personal service" as a Medical Center spokesman wrote him. However, for the same "conflict of interest" reasons he declined serving on its board of trustees.

Undoubtedly one reason that Moreau looked up and down and around all sides of an issue before taking a stand was that he was well aware of his status as a molder of public opinion, and realized it was a grave responsibility.

On the political side he was a true conservative, suspicious of big government and "handouts." In Moody's opinion, he exercised as much dominance over the electoral habits of his readers as any big city paper.

Still there were exceptions. Howard opened his letters column to all shades of political opinion. Although sometimes he couldn't resist adding an editor's note of rebuttal!

"He backed his convictions with tremendous courage even in the face of bitter opposition," declared an editorial in a Trenton paper after his death.

"He fought ferociously regardless of friends or advertisers" another paper observed, and again it was said, "he was the most tremendous influence for good in the county.

"He bought a faltering publication and made it the active, constructive, decent influence which its growing readership proclaims today," in the words of his managing editor Jack Prescott.

Howard Moreau died in June, 1963, after a long battle with cancer.

"I have never worked for a more straightforward man" was Moody's tribute. "He never raised his voice to me in criticism and scarcely ever in praise. That was his way.

"Howard was a smart, diffident, stubborn, honest, hard-working country boy who didn't trust city slickers. But he could have taught them a few things about manners and decency."

A MODERN IMPROVEMENT back in the '20's was the newspaper folder, so that no longer did the pressmen have to fold the papers by hand. Still, hand-feeding 4,000 copies of a 16-page Oemocrat, and 1,200 copies of an 8-page Oclaware Valley News was a five-hour operation in 1937 when Pressman Harold Reasoner was doing the handfeeding.

BY THE 1930's, O. Howard Moreau had already put The Oemocrat on the map as a leading weekly paper and the voice of the community. He didn't like posing for formal portraits, but agreed to do so in his office at the Court Street Building, dressed meticulously as always. The serious expression masks the wry humor he could also display.

STIRRING TIMES for a young newspaper reporter — Alan Painter who had come to The Democrat fresh out of college in 1932. He soon was caught up in the excitement of the Lindbergh baby kidnapping. As a reporter for the local paper, he was in the forefront of the action. Here he consults with a state trooper.

DEMOCRAT MOVES with the times, and installs a Goss Comet perfecting press in October of 1938, printing from rolls instead of sheets. Instead of the laborious handfed job requiring 13 hours of presswork as formerly, the Goss printed, folded and counted eight pages in two hours. The late Steve Santos, pressman, watches the operation.

A MOMENTOUS OCCASION for the Democrat was the installation of its rotary press in its new building on Fulper Road. The building had been under construction for nearly a year. It was in May of 1954 that the new press, "largest in use of any New Jersey weekly," got into operation. It could produce 18,000 24-page papers or 9,000 48-page papers in an hour.

Congratulations
Hunterdon County
Democrat
on your
150TH
ANNIVERSARY
. . . . the best is yet to come!
William A. Ford
Serving the Graphic Arts Since 1942.

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Reporter Fondly Recalls His Service At Democrat

In these anecdotes, DHM is Daniel Howard Moreau, the Monmouth County farm boy who became publisher and editor of The Hunterdon County Democrat in 1922 and introduced modern journalism to the county.

* * *

The formative period of a new style of country journalism required a modernly equipped printing plant and offices. A handsome brick building was constructed at 8 Court Street, Flemington. The first issue of The Democrat printed there was dated March 8, 1928.

DHM front-paged details of construction, how the marevlous new typesetting and printing equipment operated, even how printer's ink is made, and he invited the public to come and see.

Other publishers came from far places to observe, and were personally escorted by DHM on tours of the plant.

But, in adopting the new, DHM did not completely clean house of the old: Bound volumes of The Democrat were carefully deposited in the vault of the County Hall of Records, and duplicate copies were stored away for posterity by Hiram E. Deats, then Hunterdon County's one-man historical society. The Deats collection is now housed in the society's headquarters.

A relic of bygone printshop days was an ancient Campbell flatbed press (Harry "Hank" Reamer, boss printer, lovingly called it "country camel") — which printed single sheets, one at a time, four pages of The Democrat per sheet; then the stack of paper was turned over to print four pages on the other side.

Visitors on The Democrat's open house days will see the latest rotary offset presses, but the old "country camel" served for years with effectiveness and distinction. DHM published a story pointing up an economic policy he espoused, headlined: "Local Labor and Materials Used in New Democrat Plant" — "Flemington Mechanics and Merchants Favored" — "Trade at Home Practices."

The first edition of The Democrat in its new home included a "Who's Who" identifying the staff: "Hank" Reamer, printshop foreman, in 1928 rounding out 29 years of working for the weekly paper; his son, Harold Reamer, who had been sent by DHM to Linotype school to learn the newest system of setting type, once a laborious hand-setting chore; Mahel Carter (Mrs. Bergen Carter), who doubled as society editor and compositor; Frank Bochenek, pressman; and three apprentices, Irving Fink, Furman Yard, and Harold Reasoner.

In the front office were Mrs. Anna Apgar Risinger, bookkeeper, and Lendon S. Ebberle (who preceded this writer as reporter). With DHM, that made 10. The Democrat was growing.

Such a tall, handsome and promising a young newspaper publisher as DHM was not to be committed to bachelorhood. Flemington High School's home economics teacher, Dale Simmonds, as capable in her profession as she was comely and charming, became Mrs. DHM on Sept. 25, 1926. Meanwhile, they started building their home on Pennsylvania Avenue in Flemington where over the years they had four daughters.

Dale Moreau pitched in at The Democrat by contributing a weekly column — recipes, homemaking hints, long a popular feature. Anne Moreau Thomas, following in her mother's footsteps, today carries on this service to readers.

After DHM died of cancer June 7, 1963, Jack Prescott, editor, wrote that "by any measurement, Howard Moreau's newspaper career of half a century had been outstanding. He bought a faltering publication in Flemington and made it the active, constructive, decent influence which its growing readership reflects today."

GERALD E. ZICH, who retired in 1972 as executive assistant to Phillip Alampi, state secretary of agriculture, started his newspaper career under D. Howard Moreau with The Democrat and later the Delaware Valley News.

Some happenings, arbitrarily selected from personal memories of those early years of The Democrat and of DHM are here noted:

Plain speaking or writing was DHM's policy. He asked news correspondents, for instance, not to write "Cupid's arrows have smitten" the named couple, simply to write that they had "become engaged." "The wedding" of a couple is easier for readers to understand and costs less in type composition than some contrived wording.

Alexander Moreau, DHM's uncle and co-publisher, was a language perfectionist. DHM said he learned more from Uncle Alex than he did as a graduate student in journalism at Columbia University, where he attended night classes after graduating from Middlebury College.

This writer, starting to work for The Democrat at $10 for two days a week, and moving up to $25 per full week, needed a car to cover the news events of Hunterdon County's 278,400 acres and 36,877 population (as of 1930).

I went over my head in debt to buy a convertible coupe with two extra wire wheels in recessed fenders, and a rumble seat. "Don't worry about the balance," the salesman said after the promissory note was assigned. "Just take your time."

Two months later, the company threatened to repossess. Said DHM: "I'll take care of it." He called the Hunterdon County National Bank, of which he was a director. Refinancing arranged. Dealer outwitted. Car saved. Lesson learned.

Although he had no college education in the agricultural sciences, DHM was a natural farmer and horticulturist. He worked as a boy on the potato farm and in plant-growing greenhouses at Freehold, owned by his father. His great joy was to produce Flemington's first ripe tomato each summer. He erected a splendid greenhouse on his Pennsylvania Avenue garden.

Once, a neighbor, Gertrude Gauntt, wife of the county agricultural agent, after being told by husband Ed Gauntt that lima beans must be planted "with their eyes up," checked with DHM. He advised: "Just chuck them into the furrow." Results: Good crop. Ed Gauntt was, of course, kidding Gertrude.

Poultry was fast becoming Hunterdon's major farm industry; and everyone was filling henhouses with White Leghorns. "No character about Leghorns," DHM said, "give me Rhode Island Reds any day." Trouble was the Reds laid brown-shelled eggs, which brought lower prices on New Jersey markets than the Leghorns' white eggs.

Although he thanked persons who passed along honest tips on news stories, DHM detested gossip mongers, of whom there were a few in Flemington's environs.

When married persons separated, it once was common for one of them, usually the husband, to place an advertisement reading something like: "Having left my bed and board, I will not be responsible for the debts of" — name of spouse, etc. Either for ethical or legal reasons, DHM declined to accept such ads.

"Why not just say 'I will not be responsible for debts incurred by any other person' signed, etc.," he would suggest. Most persons agreed. Some walked out in a huff.

DHM probably lost a lot of money by rejecting advertisements for patent medicines and cigarettes, sources of newspaper revenue in yesteryear. If a druggist wanted to include in his ad some non-prescription nostrum, that was DK. But if the ad copy came in the mail from a manufacturer or distributor, he sent it back. DHM reasoned that the local pharmacist was qualified by education and government certification, and was

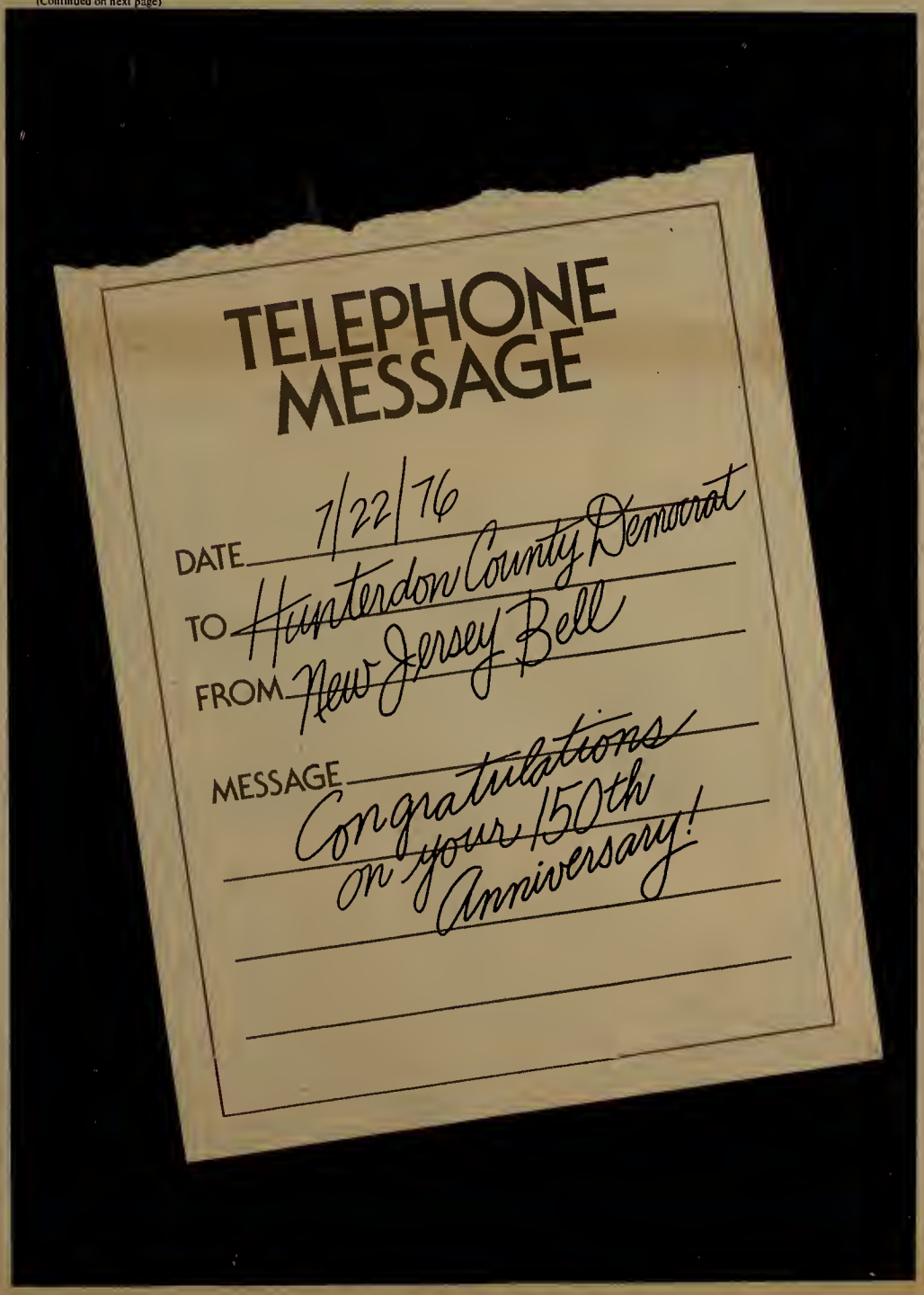
(Continued on next page)

IT WAS A GREAT DAY in 1928 when The Democrat moved its offices from Main Street to its own building on Court Street, Flemington. As the years went on, a second story was added. The location was especially important during the trial of Bruno Richard Hauptmann. D. Howard Moreau scooped the newspaper world with the "guilty" verdict by writing two versions ahead of time — "guilty" and "not guilty" — then dashing across the street from the courthouse when the result came in and signalling the start of the presses to put the story on the street in a special edition.

Your Friends
At FNB
Congratulate You On
Your 150th Year
Of Serving All Of The
People In Hunterdon County
And We Wish You
Continued Success

First National Bank of Central Jersey
in your corner of the world.

15 OFFICES SOMERSET • HUNTERDON • UNION COUNTIES • 356-1000 • Member FDIC
Belle Mead • Bound Brook • Branchburg • Clinton • Lebanon • North Plainfield • Pittstown
Rocky Hill • Roselle • Somerville • South Bound Brook • Warren



Wordy Stories Were Taboo

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responsible to the community. But he wanted nothing in his paper to promote unknown quacks and "snake oil peddlers." He was a smoker himself, of slender little cigars, and sometimes a pipe, in his early years. Cigarettes were "a whole 'nother thing."

Politics is a necessary function of the American way of government, DHM believed, and he welcomed office-seekers who electioneered with paid advertisements. Emphasis was on "paid." It was customary for a line to appear at the end of the ad reading "Ordered and Paid for by Candidate" or "by Committee."

The Democrat had to have a firm policy of "cash on the barrelhead" because it was frequently left holding the bag for unpaid advertising, especially if the candidate lost. So, "pay in advance." Most candidates did, or their ads were not run.

"You're a darn good writer," DHM once said to this reporter, "but your stuff is too long. Now, if I took away your typewriter, and you had to work with a pencil, we could save a lot of words." "But, no type-setter could read my scrawl," was the mild protest. The typewriter remained. So did the advice. DHM wrote many of his editorials in long-hand, a classic, legible script, but that takes more time than machine composition. He also used a battered typewriter with great skill, a la the "hunt-and-peck" school of typing.

Writers for The Democrat always used sheets of waste newsprint (cut to typewriter size from paper stock damaged in the print shop). A two-way fold accommodated these sheets to the reporter's pocket, and facilitated the making of notes when on an assignment. Such paper salvage was dictated by the need for economy. The Democrat was also the "community rag man" — to wipe excess ink from type, presses, and floor spills, cleaning cloths of cotton, preferably, were ideal. When the supply of wiping rags grew low, an advertisement would invite householders to "bring to The Democrat your laundered, old rags — best prices paid." Pin money for housewives, who always responded.

Back in the 20s and 30s, a "chase" or full page form of Linotype "slugs" was so heavy that two men had to carry it to the press. And, woe be to anyone who dropped it — the result would be an impossible-to-unscramble "pi" of type ("pi" is a mix-up word loved by crossword puzzle fans). Metal type doesn't shrink or stretch. Each newspaper column must be of an exact length, square with all other columns at the bottom of the page. So, "fillers" — trivial bits of information — were written, two or three lines of type to fill out or "justify" column length.

Instead of using stereotyped items like "Camels in Morocco wear copper bells around their necks so they can be located if they stray," DHM wrote his own fillers: "The Democrat lines more pantry shelves in Hunterdon County than any other newspaper." Or: "The Democrat starts more kitchen stove fires in Hunterdon County than any other newspaper." True. Still is true.

He was an understanding and compassionate man. On March 6, 1933, President Franklin D. Roosevelt proclaimed the closing of all banks for a 10-day bank holiday to let the government determine which were in sound financial condition. Thousands of banks had failed since 1930.

The prospects of closed banks were dismal for families dependent upon weekly wages, including members of The Democrat staff and this writer. Almost all had payments to meet on home mortgages, and automobiles and other items bought "on time."

In those days, The Democrat published on Thursday morning and in the afternoon printed the Delaware Valley News for Friday morning distribution. These jobs done, DHM assembled the staffs of both papers.

He told them, in effect: "You know what is happening to banks. Tomorrow is your pay day. You will get your checks as usual. Then, I'll give you cash in exchange for them. We'll do that until our money runs out. At least you'll be able to buy groceries."

A sigh of relief from the staff was followed by cheers.

Under the leadership of DHM when he was president of the State Board of Education, expansion and improvement of normal schools — teachers' colleges — was undertaken. For one college, the board wanted a picturesque site north of Trenton, a large acreage, small artificial lake, and an old mansion, once a millionaire's home.

The place had been converted into a restaurant which catered to the affluent. There were rumors that liquor was sold contrary to law. Although he was no "hard-nosed teetotaler," DHM was a truly law-abiding citizen. Bad publicity that would reflect upon the board and DHM, at least upon their judgment, if the restaurant's reputation was questionable. With his wife, Dale Moreau, nee Simmonds, DHM, and a young lady for the writer's company, we went to the restaurant for dinner, and also to check out the liquor rumor.

To a waiter, the writer whispered, "How can we get a bottle of good stuff?" "We don't sell booze," replied the waiter. After a dollar tip, he suggested, "Friend of mine sells it through the window in the men's room." Sure enough, outside the window in the darkness hovered a liquor peddler. But, the management was innocent of any part in this "accommodation." The place was not a speakeasy. DHM recommended State purchase of the property, Hillwood Lakes, now Trenton State College.

With good cause, DHM was critical of the way some daily newspapers and radio handled the coverage of the Lindbergh kidnapping case and the ensuing Hauptmann trial. The Democrat published a number of articles correcting sensational misstatements of "yellow journalists," their appraisals of Hunterdonians as country yokels, and their hooligan deportment.

It would have been impossible for a weekly newspaper to compete with the daily press and radio. DHM and Alan Painter took turns in the courtroom at the trial and, with the help of Associated Press reporters who made The Democrat office their headquarters, prepared comprehensive reports for once-a-week publication.

As the jury was deliberating, with a verdict expected hourly, DHM planned a bit of vengeance — he would put out an "extra", a special edition of The Democrat, with the verdict, and have it on Main Street, Flemington, before any daily had the news on Broadway, New York. Two sets of headlines and two "lead" or introductory paragraphs were prepared, one to be printed if the jury said "guilty," the second "not guilty." DHM, Painter and the print shop staff stood by.

After the verdict was rendered by Jury Foreman Charles Walton, the press corps was permitted to dash from the courtroom. The doors were barred and shades drawn by orders of Supreme Court Justice Thomas W. Trenchard. The Moreau-Painter team raced the short distance across Court Street to their office and gave the signal to roll the presses with the "guilty" story. Within minutes DHM was out on Main Street, grinning as he proudly peddled The Democrat's "scoop."

ON THE 30th ANNIVERSARY of D. Howard Moreau's association with The Democrat, his colleagues presented him with a citation, signed by "every member of the Moreau business family." Mary Hart, social editor and writer of the "Merry Hart" column, makes the presentation in March, 1952.

Lindbergh Trial Focused All Eyes On Flemington

By Harry Anderson

The name "Flemington" became synonymous with "Lindbergh" throughout the Western world in the winter of 1934-35.

The correlation began in September of 1934 when Bruno Richard Hauptmann, arrested in New York for the kidnap-murder of Charles A. Lindbergh Jr., from his family's home in East Amwell Township, was brought to Hunterdon for trial.

The connection in the public mind reached its height when Hauptmann's trial began in January, 1935. He was convicted after 46 days.

It was called the "trial of the century," and after 40 years, has remained that. There have been other trials around the world, involving the famous and infamous, in the intervening years, but none has come close to creating the interest of the case tried in Flemington.

Charles A. Lindbergh, the child's father, became an international hero when he made the first solo flight across the Atlantic in 1927. The child's mother was Anne Morrow, daughter of Dwight W. Morrow of Englewood, a financier, former United States senator, and ambassador to Mexico.

Lindbergh never really accepted the popular acclaim that he won with his Atlantic crossing and constantly sought privacy. It was this desire that brought the flier, his wife and 20-month-old son to their Hunterdon home.

The baby was kidnapped from an upstairs bedroom March 1, 1932. The kidnapper left behind a ransom note and a broken ladder that had reached to the bedroom window. Although Lindbergh paid $50,000 in ransom, the baby was not returned. Then, on May 12, the child's body was found in a wooded area not too far from his home.

Still the case was not solved and the story gradually disappeared from the newspapers and radio. Finally, Hauptmann was arrested after he had given a gas station attendant one of the ransom bills. A search of his Bronx home turned up $14,000 in ransom money.

Hauptmann stuck with his story that he knew nothing about the crime; that the money had been entrusted to him by a friend who had returned to Germany and died there.

His trial flooded Flemington with reporters and cameramen. The curious quickly followed, and despite the bitter cold, Main Street in the area of the courthouse was thronged each day.

The town took it in its stride. Many of the reporters lived at the Union Hotel. Its dining room and bar did a lively business. Other newsmen took up quarters in private homes and some had to live out-of-town. Lowell Thomas' nightly broadcasts were listened to by millions who wanted to know what had happened during the day at the trial.

Despite the efforts of the presiding judge, Justice Thomas W. Trenchard, there was something of a circus atmosphere to the proceedings. For example, jamming of the courtroom would not be permitted today. But that was 1935 and while everyone knew Hauptmann's name, it was Lindbergh's that created the world's interest.

Following his conviction, Hauptmann was transferred to the state prison at Trenton. Then Governor Harold G. Hoffman began his own investigation of the crime, but to no avail, and Hauptmann was executed April 3, 1936.

Few of the principals remain on the scene. Charles Walton of Annandale, the jury foreman and one of the few jurors still living, discussed the case briefly (for the first time) with the Democrat last month after a television show based on the trial. And David T. Wilentz, who as attorney general, prosecuted the case, remains active as an attorney and as a state Democratic leader.

Few of the tourists who come to Flemington today to visit Flemington Cut Glass, Flemington Fur, Turntable Junction and Liberty Village give a second look at the courthouse. Nonetheless, the trial remains "the trial of the century."

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INTERNATIONAL PAPER SALES COMPANY, INC.

Reprinted from the Hunterdon County Democrat of Jan. 6, 1955.

HAUPTMANN TRIAL SCENES TWENTY YEARS AGO

News photographs made in January and February, 1935, when Flemington was the scene of the "trial of the century." These Associated Press pictures appeared in newspapers around the world. They will recall vividly the events which brought thousands of people to Flemington every day and produced millions of words of news copy.

This newspaper bears the distinction of publishing a prediction that the Lindberghs would have a harrowing experience in the Sourlands. An aged Negro resident, Charles Sutphin, warned the airman that there were "ghosts in them hills" in a Hallowe'en feature story in this paper in October, 1931. Five months later the little Lindbergh baby was kidnaped and this newspaper's yarn was picked up and widely quoted.

NO FIRST ACT in stage drama parallels the stark tragedy of the kidnaping and murder of Charles A. Lindbergh, Jr., the early episodes of which are shown above—the empty crib—the Lindbergh home at Hopewell and the kidnap ladder—the hunt—and the sensational discovery of the body. (Associated Press Photos)

CRUSH OF HUMANITY at the Courthouse preparing to enter for a session of the trial. Twice a day thru six weeks of severe winter weather this continued.

THE DEFENDANT and the jury which found him guilty. A number of the jurors have since died, altho most are alive and probably would as soon forget their experience. They spent the six-week period as virtual prisoners, being quartered at the Union Hotel and marched back and forth to the Courthouse for meals and to sleep. Members of the jury were Charles Walton, High Bridge machinist; Mrs. Rosie Pill, Califon housewife; Mrs. Verna Snyder, Centerville housewife; Charles F. Snyder, Clinton Township farmer; Mrs. Ethel Stockton, Pittenburg housewife; Elmer Smith, Lambertville insurance agent; Robert Carvati, High Bridge educational adviser for the CCC; Philip Hockenbury, Annandale railroad laborer; George Voorhees, Clinton Township farmer; Mrs. May F. Brelsford, Flemington housewife; Liscom C. Case, Franklin Township carpenter, and Howard V. Biggs, Clinton Township bookkeeper.

BRUNO HAUPTMANN'S SEDAN, the car in which he is alleged to have transported the Lindbergh infant from its home on Sourland Mountain to a spot near Hopewell where its body was found months later. Car was viewed by thousands as it was parked in the barred space between the jail and courthouse.

THIS POLE NEAR THE COURTHOUSE was a news nerve-center thru which passed more words than from any criminal trial in the world's history. A lineman is shown making adjustments.

Justice Thomas W. Trenchard, presiding judge over the Bruno Richard Hauptmann trial at Flemington, N. J., was photographed as he arrived at the Hunterdon county courthouse on the opening day of the trial. (Associated Press Photo)

PROBABLY NO SMALL TOWN in America ever afforded more entertainment to a greater variety of human beings than did Flemington during the severely cold winter of 1935. They came in Cadillacs and Rolls-Royces; they came in jalopies; some walked, others used the train service. They came in mink coats and in tattered garments.

Peddlers appeared, offering special coins embossed with a picture of the courthouse; also "souvenir ladders" fashioned after the one the kidnaper used. They parked in all available places, they ate the restaurants out of food, and they caused police and state police details and deputy sheriffs plenty of trouble.

COLONEL LINDBERGH, first man to fly the Atlantic, in 1927, and national hero, took the stand to recount harrowing events of the night his first son was stolen and killed.

SCENES FROM THE LIFE OF THE LINDBERGHS. The Broadway parade which welcomed him back after flying to Paris alone; with Anne Morrow Lindbergh (in flight costume); the house on Sourland Mountain and the ladder Hauptmann is supposed to have used; the couple shortly after their marriage; the defendant being led into the courtroom by a trooper; the baby; the post-card note to Lindbergh from the supposed kidnaper. Significance of the ship is not revealed.

SCENE IN THE COURTROOM as the verdict in the celebrated case was given. This photo was taken contrary to the court's instructions which forbid photography during court sessions. It was made by a news photographer in the gallery using a special camera. It shows the defendant (arrow), County Clerk Fell listening to the verdict, Justice Trenchard at the bench, the late Elmer Hann, court crier, with his hand on the witness chair; the jury box and jurors at far right, and the news writers in the foreground. Probably one of the most famous trial photographs in history.

Two Men Influenced A Reporter's Future

By Bill Johnson

It was a lovely spring day when I arrived at the old Democrat office on Court Street, 26 years ago. Not that my mood was all that sunny. An earlier call to D. Howard Moreau had elicited the response, "No, we don't have any openings but, yes, I'll be happy to talk to you."

I had just left a job as editor of the now-defunct Sussex County Independent, my wife was pregnant, and I was broke. The word was that the Democrat was the best weekly in the state and I had thought, "Why not start at the top? What have you got to lose?"

One thing I had to lose was my sense of self-importance. I was ushered into Howard's office and shook hands with this tall, lean gentleman for the first time.

After we had talked for 20 minutes about life in general and my background in particular (secretly, I thought I was the hottest thing to hit journalism since Horace Greeley), Howard said quietly, "You know, I really do have a spot you could fill." My hopes soared.

"Society editor," he continued. "How does that strike you?" My hopes plummeted. "It won't be so bad," he said. "Clubs and organizations are always bringing in news copy. And you won't have to attend many social functions."

I figured I could manage it, at least for a while, especially with my bride seven months along.

"Oh, one other thing," he continued, gazing out at the park across the street. "There's a column you'll have to write each week. 'Over the Teacups'." There was a prolonged silence. Over the **Teacups**? What was I letting myself in for?

My circumstances being what they were, I took the job and never, for one minute, have I regretted it. For the princely sum of $35 a week.

Within a short period, Mary Hart Richards took over the social side and I became a general reporter - photographer. (One of the great things Mary did was to change the hideous title of the social column to "The Merry Heart.") And thus began my long, close relationship with Managing Editor Jack Prescott.

Jack and Howard.

Jack and the Beanstalk.

Never have two men differed so in personality and yet teamed so well. Jack, balding, peering owlishly over the spectacles, waspish, knowledgeable, a newspaper "pro" in every respect. Cat fancier. Heavy drinker. Tireless. A carefully concealed heart as big as a pizza.

Soft-Spoken

Howard, quiet, soft-spoken, efficient. I only heard him swear once. Jack swore all the time. Howard probably knew as much about publishing a newspaper as any man in the country, and I say that without exaggeration. He also was an outstanding editorial writer, chiefly because he knew what he was talking about. He did his homework.

Jack and Howard, one so gruff, one so gentle. They commanded the respect, loyalty and love of everyone on the staff. A remarkable pair.

My first assignments were the ultimate in boredom. How many afternoons I spent editing and re-writing the endless, deathless prose from the County Agent's office! How many hours in the bowels of the Hall of Records taking down real estate transfers! And those endless election nights waiting for paper ballot returns from the far reaches of the county! Bergen Carter's office was a smoke-filled den at 2 a.m.

In time, Jack began to develop more faith in my ability and I was assigned to cover court cases, freeholders' meetings and borough council sessions. One of the reasons I later ran for council was in the hope that we could cut down the length of the meetings. After midnight was the norm. I was elected and we were successful in speeding things up.

A number of assignments come to mind. Most particularly the Warren Lee Irwin kidnapping case. Irwin had holed up in the woods outside Mt. Airy and the F.B.I. and State Police were moving in to flush him out. What a night! Pitch black. Pouring rain. I walked into the office the following morning, the story written and no sleep. Jack looked at me and suggested that I get over to the Hall of Records for the real estate transfers. Gratitude!

LOOKING NOT much different than he does now, Bill Johnson went about his duties as a Democrat reporter.

Great Days

Those were great days. Names drift back. John Rimo. Mike Santo. Homer Townsend. Nick Zambello. Icky Reamer. Too many to name here. And too many gone.

After several years, I began to get restless and Howard sensed it. He asked me if I'd like to edit the Delaware Valley News. It was a step up the ladder and it was a challenge. It also was akin to being banished to Saudi Arabia.

I took the job with severe reservations. The office in Frenchtown had to be the hottest location in Hunterdon County. Even though we were situated over an appliance store, buying a window air conditioner never entered Howard's mind.

The job had its compensations, however. It gave me an opportunity to work with Ginny Von Weber, who did just about everything, including writing an excellent column. She was a strong right arm.

And I had a crack at writing my first editorials. Howard gave me a free hand. Even while he was writing editorials favoring Joe McCarthy, and I was lambasting that controversial senator, Howard never said a word. I was the editor of the News and he would not interfere. He was that kind of man.

Editing the News also gave me a crack at advertising layout and copywriting. I didn't know then that this eventually would become my life's work. In fact, local merchants, with their frequent copy and price changes, used to drive me bananas. But it was good experience and I believe Howard knew that when he offered me the job.

It prepared me for opening my own advertising and public relations service just 20 years ago, the Johnson-Bartnett Agency, in which I was long associated with the late Bob Barnett, another great memory and great loss.

I operate now from my home on Broad Street, Flemington, as a consultant, and enjoy the work.

My final memories of Howard and Jack remain clear. I last saw Howard in his room at the Medical Center. If I recall correctly, he was reading a biography of Alexander Hamilton. We had a nice talk. He was genuinely interested in my work and how my family was faring. When I left, I had no idea death was so near.

And I last saw Jack at his hideaway near Stockton. He and his lovely wife, Ginny, were having a party and Jack was at his banjo-plunking best. "The world . . . the world . . . is waiting for the sunrise . . ."

These two men profoundly influenced my life. I shall miss them always.

A Ladies Rest Room Once Source Of News

The tall, good-looking young man came and stood behind her as she struggled to set type in the tiny newspaper office on Main Street, Flemington.

"I'm new at this," apologized a flustered Mabel Pyatt, as she was introduced to her new boss.

"So am I," declared the young man. "We'll have to help each other. We'll get along fine."

"That was how I first met Howard Moreau, and I loved him from that moment on," Mrs. Bergen Carter, the former Mabel Pyatt, recalled recently.

The year was 1923 and while Howard Moreau had taken over The Hunterdon County Democrat the previous summer, he had been hospitalized with a long bout of sleeping sickness. Until he recovered, his cousin Charles Moreau ran the paper, and that was when Miss Pyatt joined the staff.

There are three persons in Flemington today who can recall those early days as workers at The Democrat when the operation consisted of three rooms above Higgins News Store (now the site of Hunterdon County National Bank annex), with the pressroom downstairs in the back.

Eda Williamson, now Mrs. C. Lloyd Fisher, did the bookkeeping, proof-reading and gathered locals. Mabel Pyatt was a sort of "printer's devil," she says, but also helped gather locals, which in those days was one of the most eagerly perused columns in the eight-page paper.

Harold Reasoner joined the composing room force a couple of years later. Now he is the only surviving member of the original press room crew.

"I was a man-of-all-jobs," he recalled recently. "I'd make up the forms — we ran eight pages — under Howard's direction. On the night of the press run we'd be up till 10 or 11 o'clock putting the paper together.

"How well I remember getting the forms downstairs to the pressroom. It took two of us to handle each form, edging sidewise down the stairs.

"Then the morning the paper came out, I'd take the mailing edition down to the post office, tied up in a big clothes basket set in a two-wheel cart."

Reasoner, who worked a 5½ day week, grumbled, "Boys nowadays don't know what work is."

MAKING UP a hot-type page during the 1950's is Doug Niece of Raritan Township who with 28 years on the job is the Democrat's production department person with the most service. Behind him is John Rimo, who served as sports editor.

Composing room men that Reasoner remembers in his time were Hank Ream foreman, Harold Reamer, his son, linotype operator, Irving Fink and Wilson Yard, pressmen, now deceased.

Aside from the bookkeeper and "printer's devil," Howard Moreau was the sole staff: publisher, news gatherer, writer and advertising solicitor.

(The present Democrat staff, including part-time members, now numbers 116).

While the linotype operator set the news stories on the machine, Mabel Pyatt set the ads by hand.

"I remember when setting the cent-a-word classifieds, I wondered if the day would ever come when we'd have a whole page of them!" she laughed. The Democrat's classified section averages 12 pages today. Miss Pyatt also devoted two or three afternoons a week to gathering the locals.

"There were certain gossips around town, and I'd make the rounds — there weren't many phones in those days. But the best place for my news gathering was the Ladies Rest Room. That's the tiny Greek Revival building, formerly the Hunterdon Board of Education office. Mrs. Lizzie Opdyke was in charge of the rest room and the ladies would talk to her, and she'd relay the items to me."

Another helpful member of the community was the telephone operator, Mrs. Fisher recalled.

"Those were days of the wall phones you cranked to get the operator, who knew everyone in town," she said. "Often enough I'd ask for a number, and Sarah Burd, who operated the exchange from her home on Court Street, would say, perhaps, 'oh, you can't get him now, he's out feeding the chickens. Call in a half an hour."

Mrs. Fisher can't remember what she earned as bookkeeper, proof-reader and locals gatherer, but Mrs. Carter recollects that she began at $7 a week — "from 8 a.m. till 5:30" — and was raised to $10 in six months.

Harold Reasoner made $10 to start with, but of course his was a 5 and a half day week, with a couple of late nights thrown in.

Those were the days!

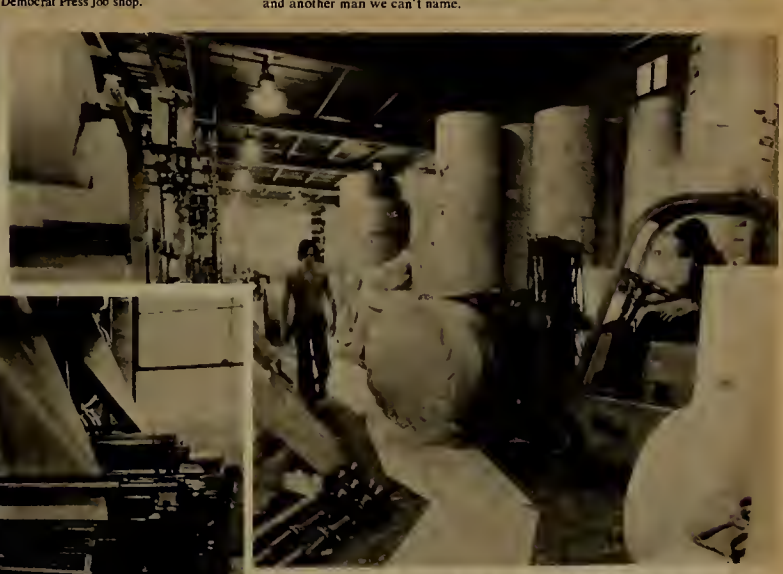
Eda Williamson left the paper in 1925 when she married C. Lloyd Fisher, later famous as the defense attorney in the Lindbergh kidnapping case. He died in 1960.

Mabel Pyatt married Bergen Carter, but stayed with the paper till the birth of her daughter in 1930. Her husband was County Clerk until his death in 1966.

Harold Reasoner followed the fortunes of The Democrat for 44 years, at the time of his retirement in 1971 being pressman at the Democrat Press job shop.

DEMONSTRATING how much newsprint the paper's 1923-38 flatbed press consumed for a single edition, Hank Reamer stands beside a stack of paper. The old press couldn't handle rolls, as the later rotary model did.

JUST A FEW rolls of paper were needed to print the Democrat in 1940. The gang that moved rolls from train siding on Fulper Road to Court Street press included, on truck, (from left), Milton Sutphin, unidentified, Homer Townsend, Ervin Frink and another man we can't name.



LOOK AT US NOW! Fork-lift truck moves rolls of newsprint into position at The Democrat's Raritan Township pressroom of today. Now it takes 30 rolls, weighing 1,000 pounds each, to turn out an edition of the paper on the modern offset press.

CUSTOM folder and cutter of the rotary press acquired by The Democrat for its Fulper Road building near the Jersey Central Railroad depot was considered a great advance in production.

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An Editor Who Left His Mark On His Staff

By Sid Moody

The first time I met John Hermon Prescott he was wearing a plaid wool shirt, a windsor-knotted solid color tie, not much hair and a dour expression as though someone had just violated all ten of his commandments.

He stopped clicking his lucky penny against a block of compositor's metal (a habit he nervously indulged to calm his suppressed wrath while suffering fools on the telephone) to shake my hand and usher me in to Howard Moreau's office. I did not realize at the time how revealing the brief encounter with the Democrat's managing editor really was.

The tie, for instance. Ultimately Jack confided to me with some pride as well as implied disdain for the less clever that he had three or four of these ties, and they were always kept knotted. That way he didn't have to retie them every morning. Common sense.

And the plaid shirts. They were warm and didn't show dirt.

The dour expression was a front. What lived behind it was a never-slaked curiosity. The expression was simply the manifestation of Prescott's constant need to know what the hell was going on — how a machine worked, why Clifford Case was campaigning in Flemington which hadn't gone Democratic since the Battle of Trenton, what was going on in your own mind and what would he put on Page One.

An example, courtesy of Dereck Williamson who often cites it: Prescott went to his grave (actually he was cremated) wondering why "they" called beaver board beaver board.

"Is it because beavers like it or because they don't?" Jack always was dealing with such imponderables, and their uncertainties accounted for his grim mien.

He also looked dour because he was dour.

He was also one hell of a newspaperman. Except typing and how to forget to pull the film slide on a Speed Graphic, he taught me whatever I learned about the newspaper business which for him wasn't a business but a way of life. It was the perfect outlet for his curiosity as well as fulfillment of his views that the world was rather mad, and if you only waited long enough, it would prove itself so. Affirmation of this week after week gave him much satisfaction and solace.

He was also one hell of a teacher, a feat more remarkable considering that he never taught. Not in so many words. He taught by example. My first day on the job he announced there was a trial over at the courthouse, and I was to cover it.

I had oever covered anything except my nudity. Furthermore, the only trial experience I had was my own after a drunk ran a red light in Williamstown, Mass. and barrelled into my sister's car which I was driving the day after my license expired in New Jersey. (The drunk got off. I was fined $10 and told to stay off Massachusetts roads for 18 months. Prescott would have been delighted at the injustice. "See," he would have said, "What do you expect?")

The trial had to do with a Hunterdon farmer who had fired bird shot in the general direction of two boys who were pillaging his pear trees. Since the boys denied it, I wrote a lead that said something like "A matter of truth was argued between a farmer and two boys etc., etc." (I was very big on matters of truth in those younger days). Needless to say, I had neglected to mention when this philosophical confrontation took place or where. Or before what judge.

FAMILIAR with every operation of the newspaper, Howard Moreau confers with his editor, Jack Prescott. The men were opposites in temperament but complemented each other, Prescott acting rough and tough, Moreau always gentlemanly. They held each other in mutual respect.

Prescott accepted the copy without looking up from his editing and placed my story on a pile. He said not a word. I thought it best to remain silent as well, taking his silence for mute approval. I did not see the story again until the front page proof came in the next Wednesday. Prescott had translated it into journalese which is to say into a simple, declarative statement of what happened in the courthouse last Monday. He still said nothing to me nor did he have to. See and learn. He used the same method with State Police stories, freeholder stories, boards of education stories, two-headed calf stories, any stories.

He did not want to be bothered to sit me down and explain tediously by rote. He was rather leaving me to find my own way by following his text book rewriting. If I couldn't do it, he wouldn't have to be embarrassed to tell me I was in the wrong business. He figured I'd find out for myself.

Although a taciturn man until, as he would say, he was "fox'd with drink," Jack occasionally used words to instruct. He is the second quietest man I've known on the telephone. For one, he didn't want to disturb those around him. For another, I think he liked to be a little conspiratorial. He also firmly believed that loose talk can cost scoops as well as possibly compel him to explain to others what he was doing. Like the cats he admired, he preferred doing things his own way. Silently.

Anyway, he usually whispered almost noiselessly into the phone unless he was trying to educate me. Then he became audible. One of my duties was to scramble like a fighter pilot when the fire house siren went off down Court Street. Grab notebook. Grab Speed Graphic. Grab extra film. Bust through the door and get in VW poised to give instant chase depending on which way the engines went. I did this three or four times a week. More during grass fire season in the spring. If Prescott ever smelled smoke in his life, it wasn't during the three years I was in Flemington. But nobody wrote better fire stories.

I'd come back smelling of wet cinders hoping I'd remembered to pull out the film slide. Jack would ask me what burned, then write it down on something. Then he'd allow time for things to simmer down and get into perspective. Finally, sometimes six days later depending on deadline, he would get on the phone, usually to the person who turned in the alarm. "What were you doing when you first noticed the fire? What did you do then? Did you have to look up the fire department's phone number? Did the cake in your oven get burned in the excitement? Who did you see at the fire itself?"

HOSPITALIZATION didn't dim Prescott's penchant for humor — and the ukulele.

Then he'd go on to whomever was mentioned. He was a master of the journalist's old trick of leading a quarry to utter a quote that you have just about put verbatim in his mouth. When he finished the story, you'd think he had been perched on the roof and only escaped immolation by leaping from the flames at the last second. Instead, he'd been in the office the whole time, worrying folks along on the phone all the while clicking his damn penny.

The method was the sturdy right arm of his philosophy of what a weekly newspaper ought to be. "Get more than the dailies," was the only precept he ever conveyed to me verbally. If a weekly could do that, its existence was justified — and assured. That, to a fare thee well, Jack Prescott did. Got more than the dailies. And he did it with himself, Ria Peale doing features and desk work, Leon Carpenter in Clinton, Mary Hart for social doings, Fran Strouse for sports and me for whatever he decided I ought to be doing or he didn't want to do. That was his staff, period, for a 48-page paper that was consistently a prize winner or runnerup. He used us like Robert E. Lee used his cavalry; as his ears, eyes and especially legs.

There was a sufficiency of people who thought Jack was caustic, abrupt, even rude. He could be. He didn't like everyone. But he was interested in anyone. What did they do? How did they do it? Why did they do it? Human behavior, and misbehavior, fascinated him at arm's length. But when people began to infringe on his own time and place, he would start interjecting an interview's over "yeah, yeah, yeah" that was half agreement and half dismissal. Next case.

Since cub reporters come and go like trolleys, he was chary of getting too close to them. It would have been an unnecessary expenditure of his husbanded reserve of bonhommie. In time, however, his defenses would peal away like an artichoke, and you would have no better friend. The ice-breaker between us, probably, was my ability to absorb his left-handed teachings without burdening him with the exasperation of explaining anything more than ten times and because I could speak French and liked dixieland jazz. He was a B, B-plus banjo player, I was a D-plus, C-minus trombone player. This led us into medleys with various musicians in various barns, barges and bars in the county where we would get jointly fox'd well into the night. (Jack got so fox'd one night he neglected to remember to open his fly during a break, the results of which cause me mirth still).

Jack had known a decent share of ups and downs. He had gone to Middlebury with Howard, then shared a room — and a bed — with another colleague at the Associated Press in Newark. They were on different shifts, so one used the bed while the other worked. He was the editor of the Reading Eagle, did P.R. for Lockheed during the war, acquired some alimony obligations and finally came to Flemington for peace and quiet and narrower but more visible horizons. If pressed, he might have conceded he was dropping out of the rat race to a degree, but it was his example, if not necessarily his intent, to show that the compass of one's performance is not important. What is is the degree of integrity with which you handle whatever your lot may be. He accepted the narrower scope yet remained a professional.

Oh, once a very large advertiser came in late on a Friday afternoon and suggested without much equivocation that the Democrat better not report a drinking-driving charge against him if it valued his business. I was trying to mind my own business unsuccessfully all of three feet away. Jack gave in. This was my turn to say nothing. Had I, his response would have probably been "yeah, yeah, yeah." Half agreement, half dismissal. Maybe later over a sundowner at the Union Hotel he might have added: "Nobody's perfect, haven't I told you that a thousand times?"

I caught him out another time when he had an imperfect kidney removed at the Medical Center. Jack was fond of quoting Shakespeare when things got really disjointed (which I sometimes think was when he enjoyed them most) and he'd mumble "tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow creeps in this petty pace . . . " which is about as black a passage as any in all literature. Well, he was in bed looking like he'd been run through an unlinked rotary press, and I thought I'd cheer him up with a "tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow ."

He didn't think it was funny. "Yeah, yeah, yeah," he groaned.

In either case Jack would have readily accepted an indictment that editors shouldn't kow-tow to advertisers or that even cynicism can have its limits. He was too honest to deny his foibles and honest enough to admit he had them. Who didn't?

I think the work integrity applies here, again. That's why I came to love that crusty curmudgeon. He knew his limits, knew he had them, knew everyone had them, knew that that knowledge should not be fatal but was rather the beginning of wisdom, and, so, what else was new?

He was also a skeptical man, by inclination and experience. Journalism requires this. "Yeah, yeah, yeah," he would say as I tried to explain away some naivete. "Moody, never assume anything." Ninety-seven times out of a hundred face values are just that. But if you assume they all are, all the time, you'll miss the three that aren't, and the dailies we'll have us by the the jugular. That's what he was saying.

And I think he was explaining his professionalism, his hard-earned knowledge that whether in Flemington on the Democrat or on the New York Times in the world there were universals. But in tiny Flemington they were more critical. In New York there were many who could and would bear the word. In Flemington, without denying the dailies their due, there were Jack and Howard to man the barricades. If they didn't get the job done, it didn't get thoroughly done.

So Jack stayed in his small pond, harrumphed and lived by the same code that is essential in any city room or publishing house in the land.

He never had any children, but perhaps as some consolation he had us, each in our turns. One of his graduates is a headmaster. One opened an advertising agency. Dereck writes books and articles for national magazines as well as a local column — Jack would have liked the balance. I write books and things for the Associated Press, in no small part because Prescott thought I'd probably absorbed all he could teach me and it was time he pushed me out of the nest, much as we both regretted it.

I guess he was right, although I've never yet turned in a manuscript or a story without wondering how it would have appeared on the Page One proof after he got through niggling with it. Sometimes I think he would have let it go through unchanged. Knowing that he wasn't going to change human nature, he was content, relatively, to let it go its way as long as he could observe it with those quick eyes of his. He was not a ruthless editor. He just wanted you to have done your best.

I don't know if Jack ever wanted to climb Mt. Everest or play banjo in Carnegie Hall or write beguiling books like Joe Furnas. I can't be sure he preferred writing about Tumble Leaf, his rural Stockton home, and its squirrels out of choice or because he had had enough of the battle and saw it could never be won, only survived. Yet he was always there Monday morning, clicking the penny, ready to resume the battle with the dailies. There was, somewhere within him shaped by whatever, an unsurrendering committment to be true to his craft. Which he was.

Maybe it was bred in him. He was a direct descendant of Dr. Samuel Prescott, the man who really completed Paul Revere's ride. I forget whether he was or was not also descended from the Prescott who commanded his men at Bunker Hill not to fire until they saw the whites of the eyes of the advancing British grenadiers — who was also the grandfather of the Prescott who wrote, although blind, the **Conquests of Peru and** Mexico, classics of American history. He derived his middle name from the people who named one of the nation's leading prep schools, Mount Hermon.

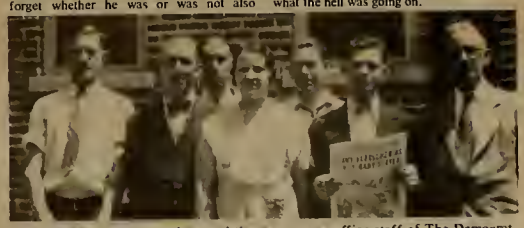
ONE OF THE DEMOCRAT'S many distinguished alumni, Sid Moody now is with Associated Press and wrote the Bicentennial best-seller, " '76 — the World Turned Upside Down."

And maybe Jack was what he was because life dealt him its cards, and the hand suited him, or it least was more interesting than folding. And there was always firewood to cut and fresh outrages to endure and an occasional little night music down the New Hope barge canal and somehow the paper would get filled up by Wednesday and once in a while there'd be a new boy, green as grass, to show the way to until he, too, went out into the world. There are worse things to live for.

I left the Democrat in 1956, but Jack and I remained friends. I even asked him to be godfather to one of our sons so he could start training him early. Then Jack had a heart attack, recovered, went back to work and had a second.

As the doctor thumped feverishly on his chest, he roused enough to ask: "What the — are you doing?" Then he died.

At the very end, he still wanted to know what the hell was going on.



COMPOSING ROOM workers and the one-woman office staff of The Democrat in the early 1930's pose outside the Court Street building. They included (l.-r.) Furman Yard, Harold (Icky) Reamer, Irving Fink, Almena Butler, Harold Reasoner, Frank Bochnek and Hank Reamer. Daily Mirror headline tells of false clue in search for kidnapper of Lindhergh baby.

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Serving Central New Jersey

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TRENTON, NEW JERSEY

EWING TOWNSHIP

A Newspaper: From A Reporter's Typewriter . . . To Your Town

A QUIET reception room awaits visitors to the Democrat. If necessary, the receptionist will guide a visitor into the hustle and bustle of the newspaper's internal workings. She also takes classified ads over the counter.

WHERE THE "action" is — the Democrat newsroom, home of the reporters and editors who gather and write the news.

PART OF the hustle and bustle begins with the opening of the daily mail by Peg Francisco, news office secretary. Hundreds of pieces of mail are received at the Democrat each week but only a few are reworked into news stories. Many, however, prompt research by the news department to develop information of vital interest to Hunterdon residents.

THE TRADITIONAL manual typewriter and copy pencil are replaced by the IBM Selectric II and a complex code system at the Democrat. Reporters type both stories and instructions to the special scanner that punches paper tape which drives a computer setting photographic type. An editing system involving red and black felt tip pens is used to prepare copy for the scanner, black to delete words and red to make specific editing changes.

TWO MEMBERS of the sports staff at the Democrat, writer John Siipola and Sports Editor Dom Forker have been a sportswriting team for the past five years. They cover events, take phone call reports, write most of the articles, make up the pages and take care of the details of covering sports in all parts of the county.

Staff Photos by Richard Rawlins

REPORTER RIA PEALE double checks a story with a source, just one of the reporter's numerous phone calls that keep her in touch with county newsmakers.

QUIET NEWSROOM occurs once each week when the entire editorial staff of the Democrat gets together to discuss major stories, develop ideas into stories and generally plan the following week's news coverage of the county.

News Staff Roams Far And Wide

Democrat Personnel Active Around County

AWARD WINNING Democrat photographer, Richard Rawlins lines up another first rate shot, traveling to all parts of the county of get the news in pictures. More than 3,500 photographs are published in the Democrat each year.

A busy newsroom is only one facet of the Hunterdon County Democrat. Reporters and photographers cover everything from accidents to art shows in a never ending effort to seek and disseminate the news to county residents. Staff members try to keep up with zoning as closely as a planning board member, community business as well as the mayor and art trends as well as a designer.

THE CLINTON office of the Hunterdon County Democrat is a mini-version of the Flemington office. The north staff is responsible for all of the news, advertising and co-ordination of the copy for the 12 municipalities they cover. Entering the Leigh Street office at left is reporter Pam Blake. Office coordinator Suzanne Powell helps one of the many Clinton customers, center, and north county bureau chief Liz Fuerst gathers information for a story.

AN UP-DATED library, or "morgue" as it is called in the newspaper world, is vitat to any newsroom operation. Here, Cecilia Davies, the paper's librarian and proofreader checks on the filing system. Files articles for future reference.

A REPORTER'S work only ends in the newsroom. It begins much earlier at a meeting or unusual event. Here, Mary Halloran, at the far right, sits in on a county Welfare Board meeting, and will return to the newsroom later to write whatever news comes out of it. A staff of 20 reporters keeps tabs on events throughout the county and nearby areas.

THE COPY desk is where the finishing touches are placed on a reporter's work. Here, headlines are written and facts checked. From left are copy editors John Bruns and Art Johnson. Managing editor Harry Anderson is on the right.

THE BENEFITS of a morgue are obvious to every reporter. Here, reporter Terence P. Wright thumbs through the files to check the background on a particular story or personality, discovers how much has been in print about an incident in the past, and may even find a photograph or two that can be used.

AS THE paper goes into the final stages, typesetters Joan Roberts, front, and Dorothy Bush, punch copy onto long paper strips that are fed into computers which photographically set news and advertising into type.

THE COPY-PENCIL has been replaced by a video-display terminal. Proofreaders see the copy placed on a screen in front of them and make corrections electronically, using the keyboard on the front of the terminal.

The Finishing Touches

After the news copy has been written and edited, it goes to the composing room, where a staff of typesetters, paste-up personnel and proofreaders prepare the copy for printing.

Stories are set either by the ECRM autoreader of tape perforators and pasted on the sheets exactly the way they will appear in the newspaper. The nine-column sheets are then photographed, plates are made from the negatives and the newspaper goes to press.

The members of the composing staff are responsible not only for the weekly editorial copy of the Democrat but much of the advertising art and copy and special supplements as well.

Following the paste-up operation, the newspaper goes to press. The press is capable of running off more than 35,000 copies of the Democrat an hour.

ECRM AUTOREADER is a device which 'scans' copy (newspaper stories) and converts it automatically to punched paper tape, which can then be run through a computer to actually set the story in type. Ken Dills feeds stories into the machine as they arrive from the newsroom, keeping a steady and flast flow of material going to compositors so that pages can be made up.

CHECKING NEWLY set copy to see if it is ready to be pasted is Al Holcombe, a member of the composing room staff. It is here that the final typeset copy is pasted up before being photographed and printed.

CAREFUL PASTE-UP is essential to a professional looking paper. The composing room staff, under the direction of Moon Frankevich (with an ever-present cigar) must carefully measure each line of a story before the paper finally goes to press. One of the staff members, Marian Niederle, works at his side, trimming copy and pasting it in place.

OPAQUING A NEGATIVE is the job of Mark Leist, who works in the camera room where photographs and pages are processed for inclusion in each week's newspaper. He removes imperfections from the negatives so that crisp, clear copies of the newspaper come off the press. An aluminum plate is made from the negative.

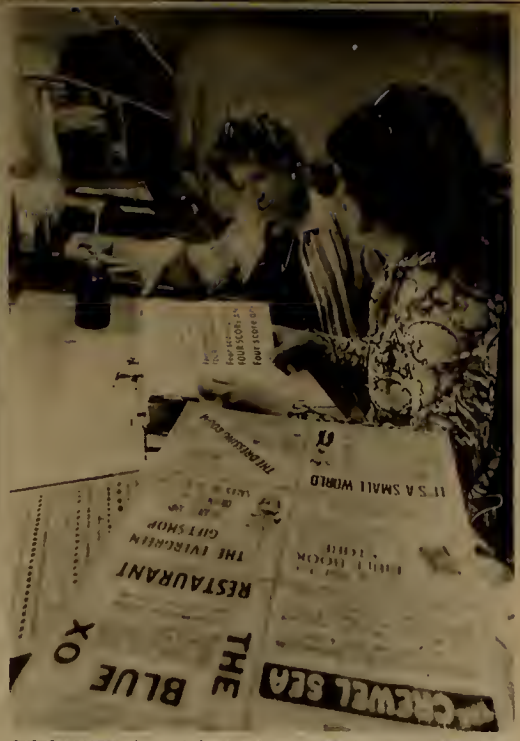
HOT OFF the presses, the community life section of the Democrat is always the first to be typeset, printed and ready to go.

STOP THE press! isn't a cry one hears often anymore these days . . and stopping it even for a short time would hold up the news considerably. The Democrat's press can print more than 45,000 copies of a full-sized newspaper in an hour.

ALL SET to go by late Wednesday evening are the 23,000 copies of the weekly Hunterdon County Democrat.

THE DEMOCRAT publishes well over 1,000 classified ads each week. Classified Ad Manager John Clark uses phone to discuss business with an ad client.

A NEW COMPUTER system has recently been installed to handle business records of a growing Democrat. Tom Cashman reviews a computer print-out and checks for accuracy. The system is expected to be operating before the end of the year.



CUSTOM-MADE ads are designed and put together by the advertising layout department. Here, Ann Martucci and Sue Felsen discuss type size for a display ad.

NEWSPAPER DELIVERY trucks are loaded with stacks of bundled papers in preparation for taking them to more than 150 newsstands in Hunterdon County and adjacent areas. Circulation manager Harry Hunt keeps a close eye on the operation, pitching in with the loading chores.

Delivering The News . . .

Once the 23,000 copies of the Hunterdon County Democrat have been printed, cut and folded, they fall into the hands of the Democrat's busy circulation department.

There, circulation manager Harry Hunt and his staff of three full-time and 15 part-time employees together with the help of about 100 carriers bring the Democrat into local stores, supermarkets or, directly to your home.

Late Wednesday evening, when the papers are right off the press, Hunt's part-time staff helps with wrapping and addressing copies of the paper.

About 8,500 persons receive the Democrat in the mail through subscriptions. The rest either have it delivered or purchase it locally.

Four vehicles bring the Democrat to various distribution points.

The Democrat is available throughout Hunterdon County and thousands of additional copies travel to Warren, Somerset, and Mercer counties in New Jersey and Bucks County in Pennsylvania. Subscription copies travel all over the country.

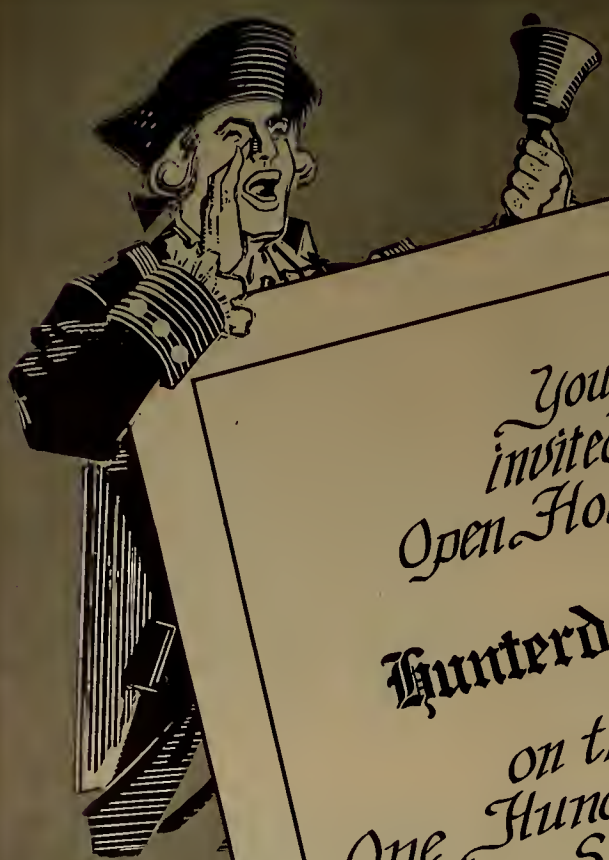
Hunt and his full-time staff, Kevin Cahalan, Barbara Blodgett, and Lillian Hanlon handle all address and subscription changes, collect fees and maintain contact with newsdealers to be sure the distribution operation is running smoothly.

BUNDLES OF PAPERS are delivered to the Higgins News Agency. More than 150 newsdealers help circulate the Democrat to Hunterdon County residents each week. The Higgins Agency is one of the oldest and largest of the newsdealers handling the Democrat. A crowd usually awaits delivery of the newspaper on Flemington's Main Street on Wednesday night. Many long-time subscribers are quick to call if the newspaper doesn't arrive on time.

OVER 100 CARRIERS help circulate the Democrat each week. Nearly 8500 papers are mailed to local subscribers and across the United States.

THE FINAL product is delivered to your door by one of the Democrat's delivery boys. Bruce Nelson folds papers preparing for his delivery.

DEPARTMENT HEADS meet weekly with publisher H. Seely Thomas to discuss and coordinate the business of putting out the weekly Democrat. Group around table includes Thomas, Editor Ed Mack, Advertising Manager Bengt Gaterud, Circulation Manager Harry Hunt, Comptroller Ken Kroeger and Production Manager Steve Harrison.



You are cordially
invited to attend an
Open House and tour of the

Hunterdon County Democrat

on the occasion of its
One Hundred Fiftieth Anniversary
Saturday July 24th
from nine to three o'clock
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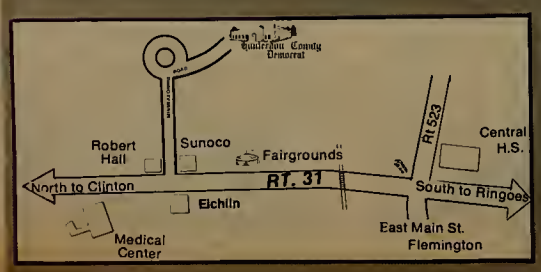
Flemington

Refreshments will be served